

insurance Worker

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Let
**THE NEW YEAR
2019**

*light the hopes of
a future that belongs
to the working, toiling, dispossessed
and disadvantaged of the world.*



YOU HAVE
GOT IT
ALL WRONG,
MR. MINISTER



FUDGING
GDP DATA



NETAJI BOSE
— Prince
Among
Patriots



कोतवाल
की लाठी,
उसी का सर



DELHI
& PARIS
A Tale of
Two Cities

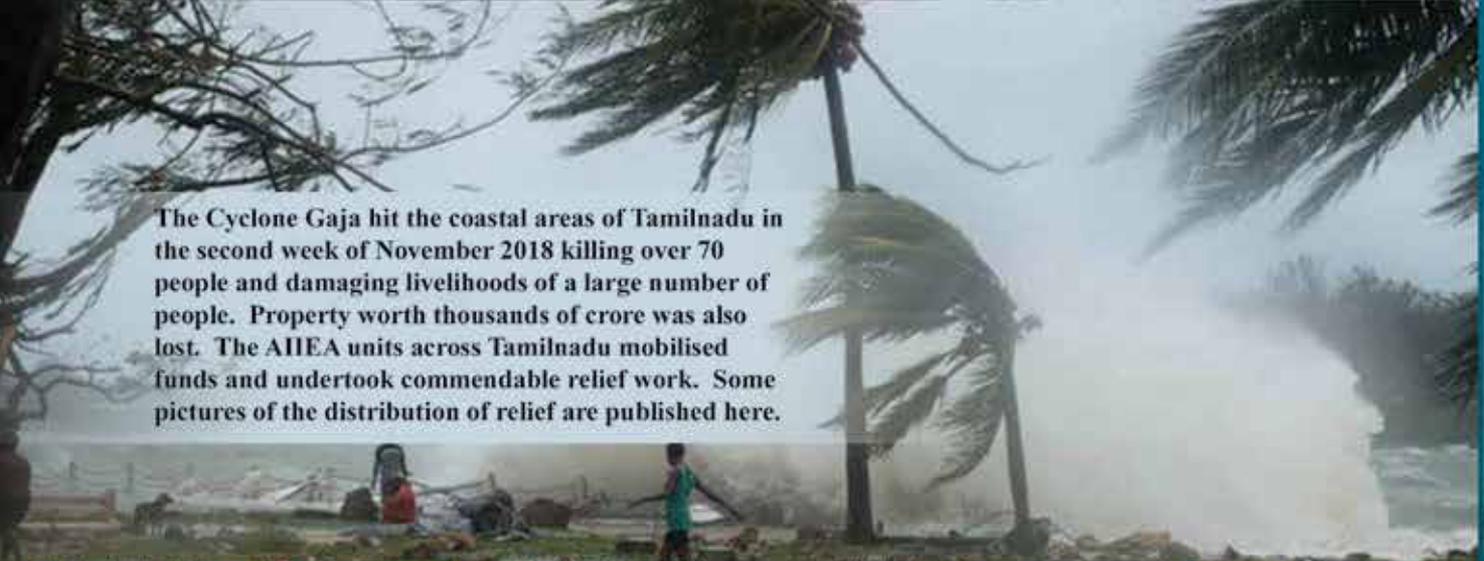


ALL
TRADE
UNIONS

8th & 9th
January
2019

NATIONWIDE
STRIKE

Against
Privatisation
&
Anti Worker Policies



The Cyclone Gaja hit the coastal areas of Tamilnadu in the second week of November 2018 killing over 70 people and damaging livelihoods of a large number of people. Property worth thousands of crore was also lost. The AIEA units across Tamilnadu mobilised funds and undertook commendable relief work. Some pictures of the distribution of relief are published here.



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Monthly Journal of All India Insurance Employees' Association

EDITOR: AMANULLA KHAN

THE NEW YEAR RINGS IN WITH NEW HOPES

The year 2018 has passed into history and a new year has dawned. The New Year rings in with new hopes.

Hopes of a better life for the vast majority of working and toiling people struggling across the world for a decent existence;
Hopes of a world free of war and of a world where communities would live in peace;
Hopes of a world free of hatred and of societies where people will respect and love each other.

These hopes representing the lofty ideals of humanity have to be turned into reality through sustained struggle against imperialism, capitalism and religious fundamentalism.

The year that has passed into history has witnessed momentous developments. The unprecedented crisis of capitalism has disturbed the relative peaceful relationship between the industrial countries. The trade wars and protectionist policies being adopted by the capitalists countries more specifically the US imperialism clearly signals a breakdown of the Washington Consensus. Globalisation driven by imperialist interests is clearly on the

retreat. The inter-imperialist contradictions that had remained subdued for decades have resurfaced again. The contradictions between imperialism and the developing and emerging economies too have sharpened.

The crisis has sharpened social contradictions as well with the emergence of the forces of right and fascism. The working class today is faced with twin challenge of fighting neo-liberalism and the growing strength of rightist and fascist forces. The world is witnessing unprecedented struggles of the working class against attacks on their wages, social security and all time high unemployment. France is experiencing massive upsurge. Such struggles are bound to develop in other capitalist countries. The greed to continuously expand profits by capitalism is creating ecological and environmental disasters. Increasing numbers of people and organisations have raised their voice demanding respect to the nature and desist from its unbridled exploitation. Capitalist greed has staked the very future of Earth and humanity itself.

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The sectarian violence aided and abetted by imperialism in West Asia shows no sign of abating. The desire to control the critical natural resources of the region by imperialism has cost millions of innocent lives. The partisan support to Israel by US imperialism has emboldened this rogue nation to play havoc with the lives and living of Palestinians with impunity in total disregard to the international laws. The decision of US and its supporters to recognise Jerusalem as the capital of Israel has made a two nation solution to the conflict almost impossible. Terrorism which is threatening the world is the creation of US imperialism and this imperial nation cannot be condoned for creating the monster of terrorism.

The Year 2018 has been a year of unprecedented crisis and struggles in India. The Indian economy is in a deep crisis. Despite claims of a fast growing economy, no new jobs have been created. On the other hand the twin misadventures of demonetisation and hasty implementation of GST has cost millions of existing jobs in the unorganised sector. The government's claim of formalisation of economy in real sense is the transfer of resources from the poor to the rich. This is evident from the enormous inequalities and concentration of wealth. Today the top one percent of the Indians own 52% of the national wealth. This is unprecedented. This year also saw unprecedented attacks on all democratic institutions and on the Constitution itself. Today every democratic institution is subverted. The ruling party and its front organisations are spreading the politics of hate. The religious minorities are threatened. Those who express opinion different from the government and these front organisations are labelled as anti-national. The patriotism of the citizens is measured in terms of their submission to the philosophy of hindutva. The crimes against dalits and women have increased manifold. There is a clear attempt to create an atmosphere of fear and insecurity amongst a large section of population.

However, there is growing resistance to both the economic and social policies of the government. The country witnessed unprecedented mobilisation of farmers, workers and other weaker sections of the society against the policies of the government. The election results of the five State Assembly

towards the end of the year is a powerful statement against neo-liberalism and communalism. The economic distress and social atrocities have united people irrespective of religion, language and region. This growing unity will also demonstrate in full measure in the proposed two day nationwide strike by the working class on 8-9, January, 2019.

The insurance employees face massive challenges in the New Year. Despite brilliant business performance, the government is moving ahead to privatise the PSGI companies. The privatisation drive of the neo-liberal regime will not spare LIC either. Therefore, there is a greater need today to mobilise support in defence of our industry to protect its public sector character. The government continues to delay and dither on the wage revision that fell due on 1.8.2017. The massive progress and prosperity of the institutions and their paying capacity justifies the demand for a good wage revision. The pension option despite strong recommendations from LIC and GIPSA is not being accepted by the government. Recruitment which is necessary for the very survival of LIC is continued to be delayed due to inexplicable reasons. The government continues to deny functional autonomy to LIC and GIPSA. These are the issues on which agitation has become inevitable. The New Year will witness massive unrest and struggles in the insurance industry on these issues.

In 1962 in acknowledgement of the Lenin Peace Prize, the great Poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz had said:

"Human ingenuity, science and industry have made it possible to provide each one of us everything we need to be comfortable provided these boundless treasures of nature and production are not declared the property of a greedy few but are used for the benefit of all of humanity... However, this is only possible if the foundations of human society are based not on greed, exploitation and ownership but on justice, equality, freedom and the welfare of everyone... I believe that humanity which has never been defeated by its enemies will, after all, be successful; at long last, instead of wars, hatred and cruelty, the foundation of humankind will rest on the message of the great Persian poet Hafez Shiraz: 'Every foundation you see is faulty, except that of Love, which is faultless'..."

These brilliant words of Faiz are more

relevant today than anytime earlier. They inspire us to fight for justice, equality, freedom and welfare of everyone. This should be our resolution for the New Year 2019. We must resolve to fight the politics of hate by spreading the message of love as beautifully said by Jigar Moradabadi:

उनका जो काम है वो अहले-सियासत जाने
मेरा पैगाम मोहब्बत है जहाँ तक पहुँचे

*What the politicians do is their business
My message is of love as far as it reaches*

नये वर्ष में नई आशाएं गुनगुनाती हैं

वर्ष 2018 इतिहास में समा गया है तथा नये वर्ष की ऊषा का उदय हो चुका है। नया वर्ष नई आशाओं की गुनगुनाहट के साथ आता है। दुनिया भर में अच्छे जीवन के लिए संघर्ष कर रहे अधिकांश श्रमिक व मेहनतकश जनता के लिए नई आशाओं के साथ ;

युद्ध से मुक्त दुनिया की आशा के लिए जहाँ विभिन्न समुदायों के लोग शांति से रहेंगे ;

एक ऐसी दुनिया की आशा जहाँ लोग घृणा के बिना दूसरे समाजों के साथ रहेंगे तथा जहाँ पर लोग दूसरे समाज के लोगों का सम्मान करेंगे और प्यार करेंगे।

इन आशाओं को जो मानवता के उच्च आदर्शों का प्रतिनिधित्व करती है; साम्राज्यवाद, पूँजीवाद व धार्मिक तत्ववाद के विरुद्ध लगातार संघर्ष से वास्तविकता में बदलना है।

जो वर्ष इतिहास में समा गया है वो अनेक महत्वपूर्ण घटनाक्रमों का गवाह है पूँजीवाद के अभूतपूर्व संकट ने औद्योगिक देशों की शांति भंग कर दी है। पूँजीवादी देशों द्वारा अपनायी जा रही व्यापार युद्ध व संरक्षणवादी नीतियां खासतौर पर अमरीकी साम्राज्यवाद द्वारा अपनायी जा रही ये नीतियां वांशिंगटन सहमति के टूटने का स्पष्ट संकेत देती हैं। साम्राज्यवादी हितों द्वारा चलाया जा रहा भूमण्डलीकरण स्पष्ट रूप से पीछे हट रहा है। साम्राज्यवादियों के बीच विरोधाभास जो लगभग एक दशक से पीछे चले गये थे वे पुनः सतह पर आ गये हैं। साम्राज्यवाद तथा विकासशील देशों व उभरती हुई अर्थव्यवस्थाओं में विरोधाभास भी तेज हो गये हैं।

दक्षिणपंथी और फासिस्ट ताकतों के मजबूत होने के साथ इस संकट ने सामाजिक विरोधाभासों को भी तेज कर दिया है। आज श्रमिक वर्ग नवउदारवाद तथा दक्षिणपंथी व फासिस्ट ताकतों के मजबूत होने से दोहरी चुनौती का सामना कर रहा है। दुनिया श्रमिक वर्ग को अपने वेतन, सामाजिक सुरक्षा तथा अब तक की सबसे अधिक बेरोजगारी पर संघर्ष करने? को देख रही है। फ्रांस में भारी उथल-पुथल देखने को मिली है। इस तरह के संघर्ष अन्य पूँजीवादी देशों में भी विकसित होने की अपार सम्भावनाएं हैं। पूँजीवाद द्वारा अपने मुनाफे बढ़ाने का निरन्तर लालच पर्यावरण व पारिस्थितिकी में भी संकट पैदा कर रहा है। लोगों और संघटनों की बढ़ती हुई संख्या अपनी आवाज उठा रही है कि प्रकृति का सम्मान किया जाये और इसके बढ़ते हुए दोहन से बचा जाये। पूँजीवादी लालच ने पृथ्वी के भविष्य की व खुद मानवता को भी दाव पर लगा दिया है।

पश्चिमी एशिया में साम्राज्यवाद द्वारा बढ़ायी गयी हिंसा

Let the New Year 2019 light the hopes of a future; a future that belongs to the working, toiling, dispossessed and disadvantaged of the world. Let us resolve to work towards such a society.

Insurance Worker extends warm New Year greetings to its readers, insurance employees and the entire global working class.

कम होने का नाम नहीं ले रही है। साम्राज्यवाद द्वारा क्षेत्र के प्राकृतिक संसाधनों को नियंत्रित करने की इच्छा से लाखों जीवन तबाह हो गये हैं। अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय विधि के नियमों की अनदेखी करते हुए अमरीकी साम्राज्यवाद द्वारा इजराइल को दिये गये पक्षपातपूर्ण समर्थन ने फिलिस्तीनियों का जीवन व जीने के स्तर को बिना किसी हिचकिचाहट के बर्बाद कर दिया है। पश्चिमी जेरुशलम को राजधानी के रूप में मान्यता प्रदान करने तथा उसका समर्थन करने के अमरीकी साम्राज्यवाद के फैसले ने दो राष्ट्र के सिद्धान्त के आधार पर इस समस्या का हल लगभग असम्भव कर दिया है। आतंकवाद जो दुनिया को धमकी दे रहा है वह अमरीकी साम्राज्यवाद की पैदाइश है और इस साम्राज्यवादी देश को आतंकवाद के राक्षस को पैदा करने के लिए कभी माफ नहीं किया जा सकता है।

वर्ष 2018 भारत के लिए अभूतपूर्व संकटों व संघर्षों का वर्ष रहा है। भारतीय अर्थव्यवस्था बहुत संकट में है। अर्थव्यवस्था के तेजी से बढ़ने के दावे के बावजूद नये रोजगारों का सृजन नहीं हुआ है। इसके विपरीत नोटबंदी व जीएसटी को जल्दी में लागू करने के जुड़वां खराब-साहसिक कार्यों ने असंगठित क्षेत्र के वर्तमान लाखों रोजगारों को नष्ट किया है। सरकार के अर्थव्यवस्था के औपचारीकरण का दावा वास्तव में गरीब लोगों से धनी लोगों के लिए संसाधन स्थानान्तरित करने का मामला है। यह अभूतपूर्व गैर बराबरी व सम्पत्ति के केन्द्रीयकरण से स्पष्ट है। इस समय भारत के सबसे धनी एक प्रतिशत लोग 52 प्रतिशत राष्ट्रीय सम्पत्ति पर अधिकार किये हुए हैं। यह अभूतपूर्व है। इस वर्ष ने तमाम जनतान्त्रिक संस्थाओं और खुद संविधान पर हमले होते देखे हैं। इस समय प्रत्येक जनतान्त्रिक संस्था को कमजोर किया गया है। शासक दल व उसके अग्र-संगठन घृणा की राजनीति फैला रहे हैं। धार्मिक अल्पसंख्यक डरे हुए हैं। वे लोग और संगठन जो सरकार की राय के अलावा राय व्यक्त करते हैं उन्हें? राष्ट्र विरोधी का दर्जा दे दिया जाता है। नागरिकों की राष्ट्रप्रेम की भावना का मूल्यांकन हिंदुत्व के प्रति उनके समर्पण से किया जाता है। दलितों व महिलाओं के विरुद्ध अपराधों में कई गुना वृद्धि हुई है। जनसंख्या के बहुत बड़े हिस्से में आतंक व भय का वातावरण पैदा करने का यह स्पष्ट प्रयास है।

वैसे तो सरकार की आर्थिक व सामाजिक नीतियों पर प्रतिरोध बढ़ता जा रहा है। देश ने श्रमिकों, किसानों व अन्य कमजोर वर्गों का सरकार की इन नीतियों के विरुद्ध अभूतपूर्व लामबंदी को देखा है। वर्ष के अन्त में पाँच राज्यों के चुनाव परिणाम भी सरकार की नवउदारवादी व

साम्प्रदायिक नीति के विरुद्ध मजबूत कथन है। आर्थिक विपत्ति व सामाजिक दमन की नीतियों ने भाषा, धर्म व क्षेत्र की भिन्नता के बावजूद लोगों को एकजुट किया है। यह बढ़ती हुई एकता निश्चित रूप से श्रमिक वर्ग द्वारा प्रस्तावित 8-9 जनवरी 2019 की दो दिन की हड़ताल में भी दिखायी देगी।

नये वर्ष में बीमा कर्मचारी भारी चुनौतियों का सामना कर रहे हैं। अच्छे व्यापार प्रदर्शन के बावजूद सरकार सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की आम बीमा कम्पनी के निजीकरण को आगे बढ़ा रही है। नव-उदारवादी शासन की यह निजीकरण की मुहिम एलआईसी को भी नहीं छोड़ेगी इसलिए लोगों का समर्थन इस उद्योग को सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र में बनाये रखने के लिए और अधिक आवश्यक हो गया है। सरकार 01.08.2017 से बाजिव वेतन संशोधन में विलम्ब करना जारी रखे हुए है। उद्योग की भारी प्रगति, सम्पन्नता व देय क्षमता एक अच्छे वेतन संशोधन को न्यायोचित ठहराती है। एलआईसी और जिप्सा से मजबूत सिफारिश के बावजूद सरकार पेन्शन विकल्प को स्वीकार नहीं कर रही है। एलआईसी के अस्तित्व को बचाये रखने के लिए भर्ती प्रक्रिया आवश्यक होने के बावजूद भी सरकार इसको अज्ञात कारणों से रोके हुए है। सरकार एलआईसी और जिप्सा के लिए कामकाजी स्वतंत्रता देने से मना करना भी जारी रखे हुए है। ये ऐसे मुद्दे हैं जिन पर आन्दोलन जरूरी हो गया है। बीमा उद्योग इन मुद्दों पर नये वर्ष में भारी असंतोष और संघर्षों को देखेगा।

1962 में लेनिन शांति पुरस्कार प्राप्त करते हुए महान कवि फैज अहमद फैज ने कहा था कि-

“मानव ज्ञान, विज्ञान व उद्योग ने हमारे आराम के लिए सब कुछ दिया है बशर्ते कि प्रकृति के इस असीमित संसाधन और उत्पादन कुछ लालची लोगों की सम्पत्ति घोषित न होकर सम्पूर्ण मानवता के भले के लिए इस्तेमाल किया जाये.... लेकिन ये तभी संभव है जबकि मानव समाज की नींव लालच, शोषण व स्वामित्व के बजाये न्याय, बराबरी, स्वतन्त्रता और सभी के कल्याण पर टिकी हो.... मेरा विश्वास है कि मानवता जो अपने दुश्मनों से हारी नहीं है वह आखिरकार सफल होगी। एक लम्बे समय में घृणा, युद्ध और निर्दयता के स्थान पर मानवता की नींव महान फारसी कवि हाफिज सिराज के इस संदेश पर टिकी होगी, ‘आपके द्वारा देखी गयी प्रत्येक नींव त्रुटिपूर्ण है सिवाय प्रेम के जिसमें कोई त्रुटि नहीं है’.....”

फैज के ये शानदार शब्द आज पहले से अधिक प्रासंगिक है। वे हमें न्याय, बराबरी, स्वतंत्रता व प्रत्येक के कल्याण के लिए संघर्ष करने को प्रेरित करते हैं। ये वर्ष 2019 के लिए हमारा संकल्प होना चाहिए। हमें घृणा की राजनीति से लड़ने के लिए संकल्प लेना चाहिए जैसा कि जिगर मुरादाबादी ने बहुत ही खूबसूरती के साथ प्रेम को फैलाने के संदेश में कहा है-

उनका जो काम है वो अहले-सियासत जाने मेरा पैगाम मोहब्बत है जहाँ तक पहुँचे

वर्ष 2019 को भविष्य की आशाओं के दीप जलाने दो ; एक ऐसा भविष्य जोकि श्रमिकों, मेहनतकशों, गरीबों व दुनिया के अभावग्रस्त लोगों से सम्बन्धित हो। हमें ऐसे समाज के निर्माण के लिए प्रतिज्ञा लेनी चाहिए।

इंश्योरेन्स वर्कर अपने पाठकों को, बीमा कर्मचारियों को व दुनिया भर के मजदूर वर्ग को इस सुअवसर पर गर्मजोशी के साथ बधाई देता है।

Tens of thousands of Central and State Government employees held a powerful demonstration at Ramlila Grounds in New Delhi on 26th November, 2018 to demand scrapping of NPS and covering all government employees under Old Defined Benefit Pension Scheme. The AIIEA held demonstrations in front of all offices of LIC and PSGI companies in support of this demand and also to give further thrust for a final pension option in the insurance industry.

The struggle of the government employees received a significant boost when the Delhi Chief Minister, addressing the protestors, announced that his government will revert back to the Old Pension Scheme. Following this, the Delhi Assembly passed a unanimous resolution in this regard and sent its recommendations to the Central Government. Unnerved by the gathering momentum of struggles on the issue of Pension, the Union Cabinet decided to enhance the government contribution to 14% of the Pay from the existing 10 percent under NPS. The Cabinet also announced tax exemption for the withdrawal of 60% of the accumulation at the time of retirement. However, this decision of the government did not enthruse the employees and they are determined to carry forward the struggle till their demand for Old Pension Scheme is conceded.

Ever since India took the path of neo-liberalism in 1991, the State has been attacking the hard-won rights and benefits of the working class by abdicating its role as a distributor of social and economic justice. It is in this background that Defined Benefit Pension Schemes came under attack. The NDA Government headed by Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee decided to withdraw the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme to its employees who joined services after 1.1.2004 and brought them under a new scheme called as National Pension Scheme where contribution is defined but benefit is not. The State governments followed the lead given by Vajpayee Government and introduced the NPS for their employees from different dates. The NDA government set up Interim Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority on 23.8.2003 and notified the same on 22.12.2003. The NPS was extended to all citizens with effect from 1.5.2009. The UPA II government got the PFRDA Act passed in the

Massive Build up on Pension Issue Make 8-9 January 2019 Strike Total

Parliament on 19.9.2013 and notified the same on 1.2.2014. It is important to note that this Bill was passed with the support of the BJP despite stiff opposition from the Left. The UPA was prevented from enacting this law as long as it was dependent on the Left for support in its first tenure. According to the latest reports available from PFRDA, 17, 88,699 Central and 33, 32,526 State Governments employees are covered under NPS as at 31.3.2017.

However, the three Left ruled States refused to follow this pattern and West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura continued with the Old Defined Pension Schemes. The UDF Government in Kerala shifted over to NPS in 2013 and the BJP Government in Tripura adopted the NPS in 2018. West Bengal continues with the Old Pension Scheme. After the Left came back to power in Kerala, it constituted a Committee to review the NPS and to suggest modalities to shift back to the Old Pension Scheme. The building up of the movement has now forced the AP government to constitute a committee on the lines of Kerala.

The AIIEA's demand for a final pension option to join the 1995 Scheme to those employees who could not exercise the option earlier in LIC and PSGI industry has gained strength with the developing of all-round struggles on Pension issue. The LIC and GIPSA have recommended the acceptance of this demand. They have been regularly following up with the government. However, the government is yet to accept this demand

despite its rationality and justness. The government employees' demand for scrapping of NPS is as much our demand. The NPS was forced upon the employees in the insurance industry through arbitrary notification for those joining services on or after 1.4.2010. The AIIEA has opposed this arbitrariness and joins the demand for scrapping the NPS for these employees.

The Central and State Government employees have decided to join the two day strike on 8-9 January 2019 to press for the demand for scrapping NPS and covering all employees under Old Defined Benefit Pension Scheme. The trade unions in banking industry too are joining the strike on similar economic demands. The AIIEA has decided to join the strike highlighting our demands for wage revision, pension option and recruitment. The AIIEA endorses the larger demands projected in the strike like Minimum wage of Rs.18000, remunerative prices to farmers and a solution to agriculture distress. The strike opposes privatisation policy of the government and demands functional autonomy to the Public Sector units.

These are just demands. These demands are vital not only to the well-being of the working class but are also in the larger interests of the economy. Therefore, insurance employees must join this nationwide strike with great enthusiasm to force a reversal of neoliberalism and to secure their justified demands within the institutions.



The Finance Minister of India Mr. Arun Jaitley claimed in a meeting recently, rather in a self congratulatory mood, that the Left ideology has become irrelevant. With an air of vaingloriousness he went on to write an obituary for the Left ideology and said that the Left has been decimated in West Bengal and Tripura. Mr. Jaitley exuded confidence that ‘the Sabarimala issue’ being so meticulously raked up by his party would ensure decimation of the left in the state of Kerala too. While it was well within the democratic rights of the Minister to entertain his own set of grand illusions, what is patently wrong is his laboured explanation to project the ideology of the Left as being irrelevant.

The ideology of the working class can never be irrelevant since it is a theory of liberation from the inhuman exploitation of the capitalist system. If capitalism as a system has exploitation built into it, it also has seeds of its own destruction. The basic logic of capitalism is profit. With a view to increasing profits, the capitalist system always tries to reduce the compensation paid to labour relative to the value that labour creates. That is to say, the value of labour is always made to be less than the value that labour creates. The value of labour can be less than the value it creates only if labour is in abundant supply. This is possible only when there is a reserve army of labour or a huge number of unemployed competing amongst themselves for a very limited number of jobs.

In order to realise this, the capitalist system tries to increase the size of the capital and eliminate the small and petty producers by way of an unfair competition. The small

and petty producers are forced to leave their respective enterprises and join the ranks of the unemployed. That’s how the size of the reserve army of labour keeps increasing while the capitalist goes on increasing their profits. This gives rise to huge inequality in the society. Since a vast majority of the people do not have adequate purchasing power, consumption demand in the economy would always be less relative to the value of output. This ultimately leads to a crisis of overproduction. The Great Depression of the 1930s and the global capitalist crisis which began in September 2008 bear testimony to this scientific explanation put forth by the ideology of the working class.

And that’s exactly what is happening in India today. The Finance Minister should have admitted that demonetisation and the hasty implementation of the GST have wrought havoc on the Indian economy. The small and medium producers in India have not only downed their shutters; they have been pushed to the ranks of the unemployed. The less said about farmers the better! Small farmers and agricultural labourers have been forced to join the ranks of the unemployed when cash was flushed out of the system all on a sudden. While more than 3 lakh farmers have committed suicide between 1995 and 2015 according to government data, the Honourable Finance Minister should have explained to his enthralled audience as to why his government stopped publishing suicide data of farmers all on a sudden with effect from 2015! That is because of a morbid fear of a revolution by the poor and downtrodden.

Mr. Jaitley is not the only one to be in the grip of such fear. It is because of the revolutionary potential of the working-class

YOU HAVE GOT IT ALL WRONG, MR. MINISTER

Shreekant Mishra



Mr. Jaitley should have known it better! BJP has lost precisely in those states where the workers and peasants have risen in revolt against their disastrous policies. The Minister, who is also a lawyer, should better understand the sanctity of the Indian Constitution. But he is openly saying that his Party will use opposition to Supreme Court verdict on Sabarimala to dislodge the Left from Kerala!



Image courtesy: Uttam Ghosh, Rediff.com

ideology that Mr. Jaitley and all others like him keep writing wishful obituaries for the Left and working-class ideology. The capitalist system is a spontaneous system. It does not permit any flexibility in its operations. No economic agent under capitalism can act according to its own sweet will. Each economic agent has to follow the logic of profit only. In its eagerness to increase profit, the capitalist system will always force labour to create more value than the value of labour itself, it has to ensure that supply of labour is always more than the demand to keep wages down; low wages have to depress consumption demand and there has to be a crisis. And all of this has to spawn sharp inequality, poverty, hunger and exploitation. Capitalism therefore can never be reformed, can never be made humane, can never be made egalitarian, can never be made worker-friendly or peasant-friendly, can never be socially responsible. If capitalism does not admit of any correction here and there, it means that the only option left is to 'overthrow' capitalism and usher in socialism. The ideology of the working class teaches us that the 'combinations' or alliance of the workers and peasants is always instrumental in the destruction of capitalism. It is this revolutionary potential of the working class that Mr. Jaitley and his likes are morbidly afraid of.

Historically, wherever revolutions have taken place it is the combination or alliance of workers and peasants that have played the leading role. Unlike Europe where the capitalists tried to revolt against the feudal lords to establish capitalism, the capitalists and landlords in India joined hands to seize political power and keep the working class at bay after independence. The capitalists in India did not carry out any agrarian reforms against the feudal order fearful of the fact that this might incite the working class to rise in revolt against the capitalists themselves. So, capitalism was superimposed on feudalism in India. The task of liberating the peasantry from the feudal order therefore falls on the working class of India and not on the capitalist class. Since the class collaborators i.e. the Capitalist-landlord class, is now exploiting the working class- peasantry combine to further its class interests, it is natural that the economic fortunes of the workers and peasants are closely linked to their united struggle against their class enemies. The neo-liberal economic policies have not only wrought havoc on the

workers; peasants have also suffered a lot. It is interesting to note that between the 1981 and 1991 Censuses, the number of cultivators went up from 92 million to 110 million. But between the 1991 and 2011 Censuses, the period covering the neo-liberalisation in India, the number of cultivators has declined by almost 15 million! This explains the magnitude of the crisis in India's agriculture sector. The distress among farmers and the helplessness among workers is powerful revolutionary material and precisely that is what unnerves Mr. Jaitley.

There is a remarkable unity of farmers, farm labourers and workers that is developing in India today against the policies of the ruling classes. The historic 180 kms long march of 50,000 farmers in Maharashtra in the month of March under the leadership of the All India Kisan Sabha to protest against the betrayal by the BJP led state government is a classic example of farmers protest in recent memory. So powerful was this movement that the BJP government of Maharashtra had to accept all the demands of the farmers. There has been massive mobilisation of farmers in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and a number of other states. The 5th September 2018 worker-peasant rally organised by the CITU-AIKS-AIAWU and supported by a number of industrial federations and unions was undoubtedly one of the biggest mobilisations of workers and peasants. Three hundred thousand workers, peasants and agricultural workers converged in Delhi to lodge their strong protest against the anti-people policies of the Modi government. The call of Bharat Bandh given by the Left and 21 other political parties on 10th September against increasing prices of petrol and diesel evoked massive response. The Kisan Kranti Padayatra led by the Bharatiya Kisan Union from Haridwar to Delhi between 23rd September to 2nd October (Gandhi Jayanti) also saw a huge mobilisation. The Long March conducted by the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee representing over 200 farmers' organisations from all over India during 28-30 November was historic. Farmers, landless, Dalits and Adivasis from across India surrounded the four corners of the city of Delhi. Workers and employees belonging to 10 central trade unions and a host of independent federations and unions in banks, insurance, central and state government and other sectors of the economy have given a call for two-day strike action

on 8-9 January 2019. This is going to be the 18th General Strike ever since the process of economic liberalisation started in India and around 150 million workers are expected to participate in it. Such huge mobilisations go on to demonstrate that the ideology of the working class can never be irrelevant.

Mr. Jaitley should have known it better! The results of the just concluded elections to five State Assemblies are too obvious to be repeated here. The Minister and his cronies in the media are trying desperately to prove that it was the 'soft Hindutva' of the Congress Party that snatched the Hindi heartland from them. But they should appreciate that the BJP has lost precisely in those states where the workers and peasants have risen in revolt against their disastrous policies. The Minister, who is also a lawyer, should better understand the sanctity of the Indian Constitution. But he is openly saying that his Party will use the Sabarimala issue to dislodge the Left from Kerala!

The eternal relevance of the Left ideology can be seen at the global level too. The French elections saw the resistance to the rise of the ultra-right. The newly elected President of France Mr. Emanuel Macron is facing the worst civil unrest that France has witnessed in the last fifty years. In countries like Portugal, Greece, Cyprus etc. resistance to the rising political right is gaining ground under the guidance of working-class parties. The Labour Party under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn in the UK has been resisting the neo liberal onslaught. Similarly, Bernie Sanders has been projecting the issues of the common people in the USA. Many neo Left formations have come up across Europe as platforms of popular resistance.

Our Finance Minister is therefore absolutely wrong when he says that the Left ideology has become irrelevant. He is probably writing off the Left because of the 'danger' of the revolutionary potential of the Left ideology. The Left ideology is an idea of liberation; liberation of the workers from the most gruelling economic and social conditions imposed by capitalism. Such an idea of liberation can never become irrelevant. It will continue to inspire the toiling masses to wage fierce battles against capitalist exploitation. For the apologists of capitalism such an idea may be dangerous. But in the words of Oscar Wilde, the Irish playwright and writer, "An idea that is not dangerous is unworthy of being called an idea at all". ●

After dampening economic activities through draconian demonetisation and hasty implementation of GST, the present NDA government has relinquished all ethical values in politicising national income statistics to prove that average growth during the UPA regime down from previous estimates, while growth during the NDA period is pegged higher than during UPA. The back-series Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data released jointly but unusually by Rajiv Kumar, Vice-Chairman of NITI Ayoga and Chief Statistician Pravin Srivastava, deputy director general of Central Statistics Office (CSO), has denigrated growth story of UPA. This has triggered debate and controversy with Congress dubbing new GDP figures misleading. Chidambaram called the revision a "hatchet job". Other opposition parties too termed the data release a "gimmickry, jugglery, trickery and chicanery".

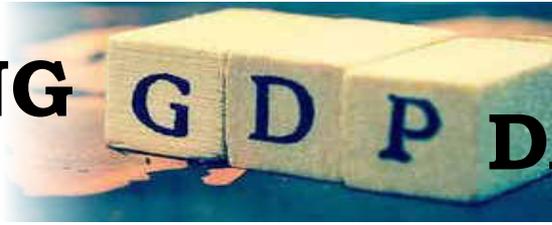
What is back-series GDP DATA?

In 2015, the government adopted a new method for the calculation of the GDP of the country by the CSO in line with international practice under then chief statistician TCA Anant. The new benchmark measure of GDP numbers or economic growth is based on market prices, not on factor costs like earlier with the base year shifted to 2011-12 from 2004-05. Thus, the GDP at market price would exceed the GDP total obtained at factor cost by the amount of product and production taxes reduced by the value of similar kinds of subsidies. Hence, GDP at market prices referred to as GDP and equal to Gross value added (GVA) at basic prices plus indirect taxes minus subsidies. However, this had led to the problem of not being able to compare recent data with the years preceding 2011-12. The back series data provided the earlier years' data using the new calculations.

Recalibrating Data

Recalibrating data of past years using 2011-12 as the base year instead of 2004-05, the new back series data reveals that India witnessed lower rate of growth during the UPA years between 2005-06 and 2011-12 than what was estimated using the earlier methodology. GDP growth during the UPA years averaged 6.7 per cent, which is lower than the average growth of 7.35 per cent during the first four years present NDA government and much less than 7.75 percent in 10 years of UPA (8.1 per cent UPA-I and 7.46 per cent UPA-II respectively)

FUDGING GDP DATA



Dr Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

Neither the Congress nor the BJP is prepared to accept the grim reality that GDP growth neither reflects well-being nor prosperity as reflected in India's abysmal position in many international indicators such as human development, hunger, happiness, human capital index despite high growth. This back series just adds to the impression that this government often finds the truth inconvenient when it exposes its weakness.

estimated using the older method. Under the new series, average economic growth between 2012-13 and 2017-18 stands at 6.9 percent. But this is in sharp contrast with back series data released by the National Statistical Commission headed by Dr Sudipto Mundle (chairman of Committee on Real Sector Statistics) in earlier this year, which showed that growth during the UPA years, crossed 9 percent on at least four occasions, and achieved double-digit growth once in 2007-08 at 10.23 per cent and then in 2010-11 at 10.78 per cent. It had also reckoned that 2010-11 saw 10.8 per cent growth, the highest in history, beating 10.2 per cent in 1988-89 under Rajiv Gandhi. The best years of economic growth were the UPA years 2004-2014 with average growth rate of 8.36 per cent in UPA-I and 7.68 per cent in UPA-II against 5.68 per cent in NDA-I and 7.3 per cent in first 4 years of NDA-II.

Reasons for divergence of GDP Figures

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation defended the method by stating that preparation of the back series is largely the same as what is used to calculate the data using the new base. In reality divergence in GDP data is due to new weights, splicing, , manipulation of data through increasing GDP deflator, fiddling with "fuzzy" data or "rebalance" by government to prove that it has performed better than UPA. This is evident from the fact that in 2015, when GDP was revised as per new methodology, it was enhanced for 2012-13 and 2013-14, but how same declined for other years of UPA. Real GDP or economic growth is measured by subtracting inflation (measured by GDP deflator) from nominal GDP. A significant

part of the downward revision in economic growth between 2004-05 and 2013-14 can be attributed to the upward revision in the GDP deflator to 8.4 per cent from 7.5 per cent earlier as economic growth at current prices remains broadly similar at about 15 per cent in both the series (i.e., 15 per cent during the 2005-14 in new series and 14.9 per cent in 2004-05 series)

According to Ashok V Desai, former chief economic advisor, ministry of finance, the GDP puzzle is due to figures of the past years being recalculated with new more recent weights. When longer series are required or data is not available, they are calculated by splicing or merging old series with new ones. Splicing method is to make provision for the appearance of new items or the disappearance of items previously in use, e.g. in price index numbers, when commodities go off the market. In theory, national income in the 1900s could be recalculated using the weights of 2011-12. But it would make no sense because many goods and services of today did not exist 100 years ago, and many that were important then are no longer so. Further, recalculating past figures with recent weights is not wrong but bizarre. For instance, the banking department of the Reserve Bank of India, which does not produce any business, is ironically now treated as a market enterprise. Similarly, stock broking has been included in GDP, which is just markets and does not produce anything, like any other. In the communication sector, telecom subscriber base was used in the old series as benchmark, which has been changed to minutes of usage in the back series.

As splicing has been applied for preparing the estimates in construction sector entirely and applied partially in agriculture and

allied sectors, gas, trade, repair, hotels and restaurants, real estate, ownership of dwelling and professional services, public administration and defence and other services, it might have been manoeuvred to show lower growth in UPA regime. While calculating GDP, in new methodology, Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA-21) database forms the basis of the entire corporate sector growth estimates. But the problem is unavailability of matching data for the older series. The key difference between the two was that the old method measured volumes — actual physical output in the manufacturing sector, crop production, and employment for the services sector, while the MCA-21 database linked with balance sheet data of each company and aggregating the performance of the sector from that, after adjusting for inflation. MCA- 21 was not particularly stable before 2010-11 and simply did not exist before 2006-07. So the National Statistical Commission (NSC) had used CMIE corporate database to back calculate from 2010-11 as a proxy of MCA 21. This might have led to reduction of GDP growth in UPA regime.

Not in Synchronization with other Economic Indicators

What is outlandish is that the new GDP series is not in synchronization with other available economic indicators such as investment trends, bank credit growth, tax collections, corporate earnings, sensex, and foreign trade among others. In other words, the performance during the UPA period on above indicators was willy-nilly much better than in the NDA period and reflective of a much faster-growing economy. What is preposterous is that the GDP growth under Modi government

is pegged higher when all other economic parameters pointed downwards. For example, between 2006-07 and 2011-12, average growth in bank credit stood at 20.3 percent. Between 2012-13 and 2017-18, average growth fell to 12.3 percent. There has been similar slowdown in India's foreign trade in the last 4 years. Our exports not crossing \$ 315 billion mark registered in March 2014. Jobs have also declined.

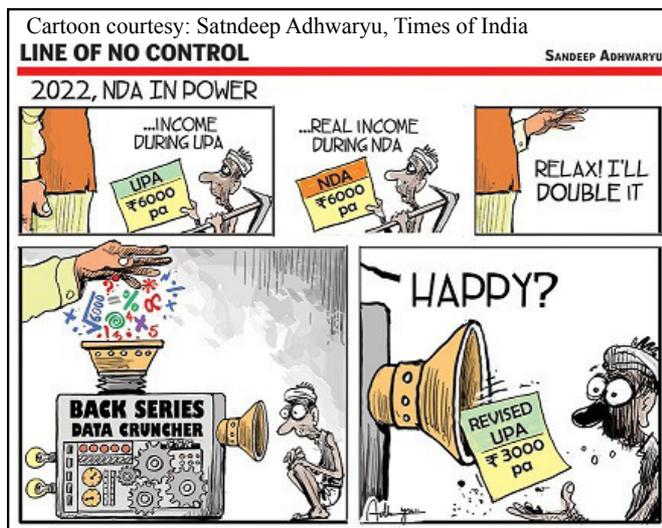
Tax collections, empirically proven to correlate well with GDP growth, also show conflicting trends. The tax buoyancy, both at central and state level was also greater during the of UPA government. Only indirect tax is only parameter where NDA has improved performance over UPA. Tax collections grew at 16.5 percent from 2006-07 and moderated to 13.8 percent for the same duration after 2012-13. However, indirect tax is regressive and recent rise is also due to increase in excise tax on petroleum products.

There is deceleration in investment rate from 39.8 per cent in 2010-11 to 30.6 per cent in 2017-18 and decline in gross savings rate to 29.6 per cent in 2016-17 from 36.2 per cent in 2010-11. Corporate India's combined revenue grew at a (CAGR) of 18.9 per cent between 2004-05 and 2013-14 against 5.2 percent growth under NDA-11. The broader stock market reflected by BSE Sensex appreciated 14.7 percent annually between 2004-05 and 2013-14, against 10.2 per cent a year in the last four years. Similarly, private sector capital expenditure too has decelerated sharply from 20.5 per cent a year under the UPA to 8.7 per cent under the current dispensation. The average income earned by Indians grew at the slowest pace in six years in 2017-18, as growth in the economy sputtered and inflation remained low.

Conclusion

Right from the beginning, Kuznets founder of GDP and other economists highlighted that GDP was not a measure of prosperity. High GDP growth does not tell you anything about the welfare consequences of growth. The all-important question of whether welfare has increased is completely ignored. Nor does it tell you whether growth has come at the cost of greater income inequality, between individuals and/or between regions, as is increasingly the case. Neither the Congress

contd on p.19



Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

– Prince Among Patriots

Dhrubajyoti Ganguly

During the last few years about 83000 pages of information on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose have been declassified by the Government of India and West Bengal Government. However, the sudden disappearance of Subhas Chandra Bose in 1945 still remains a mystery. Netaji was a great son of India who through his own methods wanted to free the country from British colonialism. He held firm convictions on social justice and communal harmony. Ironically such a great personality who hated sectarianism and was a believer in socialism is being appropriated by the present ruling dispensation for political gains.

On October 21, 2018 in observance of 75th anniversary of the proclamation of Azad Hind Government, our Prime Minister donning the famous Azad Hind Fauj Cap hoisted the National Flag at Red Fort and said Bose wanted India as a strong military power. In another speech Mr. Modi wearing the same cap but a saffron scarf too mentioned of Haripura Congress incident and audaciously said “*Bose Babu ne kaha tha; tum mujhe khoon do, mai tumhe Azadi dunga,*” and then he added ; “*mai ne bhi 2009 may Haripura se kaha ki Tum mujhe sath do may tumhe Vikash dunga*”!! By this Prime Minister wanted the nation to believe that both he and Netaji had identical thoughts. Nothing can be farther from truth.

For Netaji freedom from colonialism also meant decent life for all citizens. He said, “*since politics and economics are inextricably bound up together and since the British rule in India exists not only for political domination but also for economic exploitation – it follows that political freedom is primarily an economic necessity to us. The problem of giving bread to our starving millions – the problem of clothing and educating them – the problem of improving health and physique of the Nation – all these cannot be solved as long as India remains in bondage...*”.

He outlined three basic objectives in this direction: i) The economic system, after independence would gradually be put under the Government Control and the control of



Mahatma Gandhi aptly described Subhash Chandra Bose as “the Prince of Patriots” though he differed with the methods he chose to free India. His patriotism was not radical nationalism as being chanted today. He stood always beyond religion, caste and language and laid great emphasis on communal harmony and economic and social justice. His thoughts were totally opposed to the social illiberalism and economic liberalism being practiced by the Modi Government. Netaji cannot be allowed to be appropriated by forces that are hostile to his thoughts.

capital would not be passed on to Indian Capitalists from the hands of the foreigners ii) The independent Government was not supposed to raise any alibi to provide food, clothes, homes, health care etc. to the people of India iii) The Government of independent India shall not connive with foreign powers at the cost of the interest of the people at large. This outline of economic policy for Independent India is totally divergent from neoliberal economic policies being practiced by Modi Government.

Netaji’s major emphasis in public political life was to unite various religious communities of India and be very generous to the minorities especially the Muslims. He was extremely critical of Hindu Mahasabha. As the President of Congress through a resolution on December 6, 1938 he barred its members from joining

Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League. In 1940, Subhas Chandra Bose had written a vitriolic editorial about the Hindu Mahasabha in the *Forward Block* magazine dated March 30, 1940 on elections to Calcutta Municipal Council. He pointed out Hindu Mahasabha showed “*greater vigour in fighting congress than in resisting British domination*”. He wrote, “*The Hindu Mahasabha candidates included men who had tried their level best to break the congress Municipal Association and to that end had formed the united party in the Corporation in co-operation with British and nominated groups of councilors*”.

He went on writing “...one could easily anticipate how they would behave in future”. (Ref: Netaji Collected Works, volume 10.) On August 31, 1942, in a broadcast from Azad Hind Radio Germany, Subhas Chandra Bose spoke highly about the *Quit India Movement*, exhorted the people of India to carry on with the struggle, and in that speech he said; “... I would request Mr. Jinnah, Mr. Savarkar and all those leaders who still think of compromise with the British, to realize once for all that in the world of tomorrow, there will be no British empire. All those individuals, groups or parties who now participate in the fight for freedom will have an honored place in the India Tomorrow. The supporters of British Imperialism will naturally become non-entities in a free India.” This call of Netaji went unheeded by Hindu Mahasabha as its leader Shyama Prasad Mukherjee advised British Authorities methods to quell and crush the Quit India Movement.

In 1915 at the age of Eighteen Subhas Chandra Bose had decided the path of his life and declared “*My Life is a mission – a duty*”. Young Subhas was sent to England to qualify and join the Indian Civil Service (ICS). The brilliant student Subhas Bose stood 4th

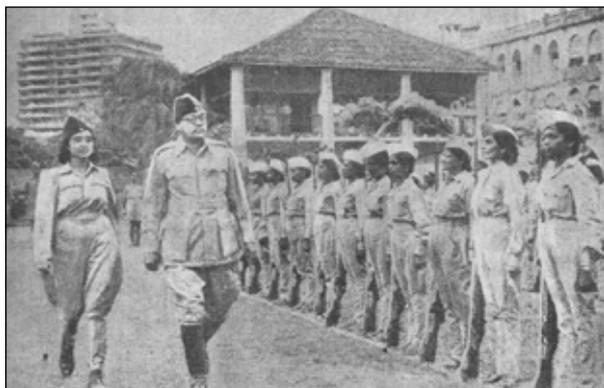
in ICS, but resigned from ICS and returned home on July 16, 1921. On the same day he went to meet Mahatma Gandhi and after a long discussion Gandhiji advised him to meet Chittaranjan Das in Bengal and Subhas Chandra Bose started his journey as a whole time politician with the single ambition to make India Free. Within a very short time he grew as a very promising leader. He became the General Secretary of Bengal Provincial Congress and also leader of the Swaraj Party.

It is worthy to mention here about the Swaraj Party’s ‘*Bengal Pact*’ which drew the backward Muslims into the main stream struggle. The pact had ensured social and economic upliftment of the backward Muslims in Bengal. But this offended the middle class Hindus and even Surendra Nath Banarjee and B.C. Pal opposed the pact. However Netaji supported and campaigned for the pact as a necessity to bring about Hindu-Muslim Unity and strike at the root of the communal strife. This clearly shows how committed he was to communal harmony and thoughtful on the economic needs of the minorities.

His views on how to treat the minorities were totally different from those of Hindutva forces. The workers’ well being and gender equality were very close to his heart. He always supported the demands of the workers and women within the Congress and also supported the growing influences of the revolutionaries and the communists within the Congress. He had organised a rally of 1000 workers and over 100 women while Calcutta Congress (1928) was in session and entered the hall urging that the leaders must listen to the workers.

In 1929 with support from the communists he became the President of All India Trade Union Congress. He had also chaired the post of President of the Left Co-ordination

(Left) Netaji inspecting the parade of the women’s contingent of INA, along with Captain Lakshmi Swaminathan (later Sahgal); (Right) Historic INA Trial of top INA commanders, Shah Nawaz Khan, Prem Sahgal and GSDhillon by British authorities was opened in November 1945. Congress party formed a defence committee of eminent lawyers which included Jawaharlal Nehru.



Committee. Subhas Bose was elected as the President of the Congress in 1938 and he placed his view on economic policies of Independent India which were different from the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1939 with the support of the revolutionaries and the Communists, he was re-elected as the President of the Congress Party but resigned from the post on 29th April 1939 as Gandhiji was not happy with the defeat of his candidate Pattabi Sitaramayya. Thereafter, he formed his party *Forward Block* on 3rd May 1939 but asked his supporters to strengthen the Congress. Even after he was expelled from the Congress he addressed many meetings of the Congress party at various provinces. Perhaps the last meeting of Subhas Bose was in Dhaka where he inaugurated the Congress conference and decided to observe "Sirajudaulah Day" on 3rd July 1940 and organised *Satyagraha* to dislodge the Hallowell Monument. On 2nd July, perhaps he faced the 11th and the last arrest. He refused to be in prison at such a crucial time and declared fast till death and the British Government was forced to release him.

He saw in the Second World War an opportunity to free India from British rule. He was of the opinion that enemy's enemy can be our friend and therefore sought the support of Japan and Germany to overthrow British rule in India. On January 26, 1941 he left India in disguise despite being under close watch. His indomitable spirit and courage, versatility in various languages marked his escape to Germany via Kabul and Moscow. He went to Nazi Germany and then to Japan. He became the leader of the already grown Indian Independent Movement in South East Asia and acquired epithet of Netaji.

He proceeded with Japanese aid and influence to form a trained army of 40000 troops. On October 21, 1943 Bose proclaimed the establishment of a Provisional Independent Indian Government and he named his army as Azad Hind Fauj. The Fauj reached Indian Soil on March 18, 1944 and moved in to Kohima and Imphal. But with the surrender of Japan, the British Army captured the brave freedom fighters of Azad Hind Fauj. When these arrested soldiers were brought to Red Fort, people across the country came out in protest and demanded their unconditional release. From Gandhiji to Nehru all the leaders were organising huge rallies on the demand. The freedom movement reached its peak and finally Freedom came to Netaji Subhas Bose's



Cartoon courtesy:
Satish Acharya, sify.com

motherland. But he was not there to see that freedom. The mystery of his disappearance still remains unresolved. The Japanese Officials hold the view that Netaji died in an Air Crash on 18th August 1945.

The contributions of Subhas Chandra Bose thoughts in post independent India were immeasurable. His thoughts on economy and social organisation found reflection in the Indian Constitution. Mahatma Gandhi aptly described Subhash Chandra Bose as "the Prince of Patriots" though he differed with the methods he chose to free India. In 1962 the Communist Party reassessed the role of Netaji saying their earlier assessment was not fully right. It said that despite having reservations on the tactics of seeking help from the fascists to get freedom; his patriotism was beyond any doubt. Later it revealed from the history that Subhas Bose never compromised with Hitler's administration.

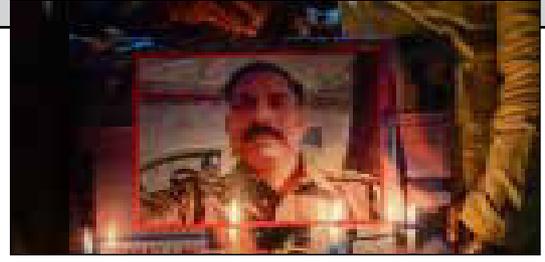
In today's India, the teachings of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose are of immense importance. His patriotism was not radical nationalism as being chanted today. He stood always beyond religion, caste and language and laid great emphasis on communal harmony and economic and social justice. He advocated for state controlled economy with the Public Sector playing the leading role. He was a strong proponent of radical land reforms. These understandings of Netaji are totally opposed to the social illiberalism and economic liberalism being practiced by the Modi Government. Netaji cannot be allowed to be appropriated by forces that are hostile to his thoughts. The Indian working class as the true inheritor of the great legacy of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose should continue its fight against neo-liberalism and communalism.

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कोतवाल की लाठी, उसी का सर

रामचन्द्र शर्मा

कोतवाल की लाठी उसी के सिर पर कैसे इस्तेमाल की जा सकती है और झूठ को पांव से चलाकर कैसे लोगों की जुबां पे बैठाया जाता है, यह कोई भाजपा और उसके संघ परिवार से सीखे। भीड़ अंधी होती है परन्तु यह एकाएक नहीं नियोजित होती है और उसके नियोजक न कभी मार खाते न कभी सामने आकर लड़ते। वे तो मोहरों का इस्तेमाल कर अपना 'गेम' खेलते हैं। हम बचपन से सुनते और देखते आये हैं कि किस तरह से गाय-सुअर के इस्तेमाल से हिन्दू-मुस्लिम दंगे भडकाये जाते रहे हैं। हमने देखा है इनके शिकार होने वाले प्रायः निर्दोष तो शिकार करनेवाले भ्रमित परन्तु करवानेवाले बहुत 'स्याने' होते हैं और कभी पकड़े नहीं जाते। अब तो सरकार की सरपरस्ती में ये 'स्याने' और भी शक्तिसम्पन्न तथा ज्यादा तकनीकी हो गये हैं। अब तो कोतवाल क्या न्यायधीश तक की आ लगी है। हिन्दू वोटों धुवीकरण के मकसद से गोमांस, गोकसी, गोतस्करी और लव-जिहाद के नाम पर एक समुदाय विशेष को किस तरह से शिकार बनाया जा रहा, इसके उदाहरण घटना दर घटना से हमारे सामने आते रहे हैं। ३ साल पहले गोमांस पकाने के नाम पर जिस अखलाक की भीड़ हत्या की गई थी, उसकी जांच रपट उनके मुताबिक न पाकर जांचकर्ता बुलंदशहर के दरोगा सुबोध कुमार सिंह की भीड़ हत्या भी उसी अंदाज में कर दी गई। कितनी ही होशियारी बरतें खोजी सच को द्रढ़ ही लाते हैं। खोजी रपटों के अनुसार गाय काटने, हल्ला मचाने, हत्या करने वालों में एक भी मुसलमान नहीं बल्कि शिकायत करनेवाले, शिकार होनेवाला और शिकार करनेवाले सभी हिन्दू ही थे। इस बीच गुजरात के गृहमंत्री हरेन पंड्या, जज लोया की हत्या के बनाये गये रहस्य और गुजरात के नरसंहार के सूत्रधार बार बार बेबर्दा होने को रहे परन्तु सत्ता के जोर से फिर फिर कर मिट्टी में हैं। पिछले साढ़े चार सालों में भीड़ हत्याएं नियोजित शकल में लक्षित को शिकार कर रही हैं। जो उनके मुताबिक नहीं है और लक्ष्य में बाधक है, वही लक्षित शिकार अगली घटना का उदाहरण बनकर सामने आ जाता है। बावजूद इसके तंत्र उसी 'मोड' पर चलता रहता है जिस 'मोड' में सत्ता उसे चलाना चाहती है। इस बीच इस एक पक्षीय 'मोड' के खिलाफ शीर्ष न्यायपालिका के ४



In incident after incident, the country is witnessing a situation, in which the legislature, administration and even judiciary, are, expected to toe the line of the rulers and abide their diktats. The lynching of the Police Inspector in Bulandshahr is the latest instance. But the peasants and common people of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh & Chattisgarh have spoken; they have defied the diktats. Will others follow?

सूरमाओं की हिम्मती बयानी दिषा परिवर्तन की एक आस जरूर जगा गई थी परन्तु अब तो प्रधानसेवक 'कांग्रेस से डरने की जरूरत नहीं, के इशारों में अपने सम्बोधन देकर बार-बार डरा रहे हैं। देखते हैं, न्यायपालिका इसका कैसे संज्ञान लेती है?

“जो तुमको पसंद, वो बात कहेंगे, दिन को कहो रात, तो रात कहेंगे”, एक कवि की कही ये बात हो या दूसरे कवि की कही ये बात - “राजा बोला रात है, रानी बोली रात है, मंत्री बोला रात है, संतरी बोला रात है और यह सुबह सुबह की बात है”, दोनों का एक ही कथ्य है कि मुंड शासक की जुबां से निकले शब्द चाहे वह कितने ही झूठे, अनैतिक, अन्यायपूर्ण और अताकिक क्यों न हो, विधायिका, प्रशासन और न्यायापालिका को उसी के अनुरूप आचरण करने के लिए ढाला जाता है। जो ढलने को तैयार नहीं, उसे शासन के कोड़े खाने को तैयार रहना होगा। कहने को तो हमारा देश लोकतांत्रिक है। उसका अपना संविधान भी है। विधायिका, व्यवस्थापिका और न्यायपालिका को उसके अनुरूप अपनी जिम्मेदारियां निभानी है परन्तु वर्ष २०१४ से सत्तारूढ़ दल भाजपा के अध्यक्ष अमित षाह और प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की भाषा और हस्तक्षेप ऐसी परिस्थितियों को बुन रही हैं कि जो उनको पसंद नहीं है, वो काम हमारी किसी भी स्वायत्तता सम्पन्न संस्था ने अपने विवेक से यदि कर दिया तो सरकार के बेजा दखल से उसका लागू होना तो मुश्किल हो ही जायेगा उल्टा निर्णय लेने वालों का पद और प्रतिष्ठा ही नहीं जीवन की भी आ लगेगी।

आजकल ऐसा एक बार नहीं, बार बार हो रहा है। देश के इतिहास में एकपक्षीय दबाव के खिलाफ और लोकतंत्र की रक्षार्थ न्यायपालिका के ४ न्यायाधीशों को प्रेस कांफ्रेंस कर मीडिया को जहां अपना दर्द बताना पड़ा वहीं अनेक संस्थानों के प्रमुख टकराव की स्थिति में पद त्यागकर चलते बने। वक्त के हालात बयां कर रहे हैं कि शीर्ष न्यायपालिका के ४ न्यायाधीश उस समय हौसले के साथ लोकतंत्र की रक्षार्थ सामने नहीं आते, तो आज शीर्ष न्यायपालिका की स्थिति भी सी.बी.आई जैसी होती। एक पक्षीय तंत्र को गढ़ने

Cartoon courtesy: Sajith Kumar



की पेश चुनौतियों के खिलाफ भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक के पूर्व गवर्नर रघुराम राजन के बाद उर्जित पटेल भी अब उसी राह चल पड़े नजर आ रहे हैं। भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम के अध्यक्ष एस.के.राय और नीति आयोग के उपाध्यक्ष अरविंद पनगडिया का कार्यकाल के बीच में छोड़ पहले ही चला जाना, ऐसी ही दास्तान का हिस्सा हैं। शिक्षा, चिकित्सा, साहित्य और सांस्कृतिक मामलों से जुड़ी अनेक संवैधानिक संस्थानों के प्रधानों की समय समय पर हुई ऐसी गति हम निरन्तर देख रहे हैं। राजनीतिक वैचारिक विरोधियों को कुचलने के लिए तोता कहलाने वाली जांच एजेन्सी के मनचाहे इस्तेमाल की इंतहा में अब उसे पिंजरा तोड़ बाज का रूप धर लिया है। जबकि खिसियाई सरकार इसे दो बिल्लियों की लड़ाई की संज्ञा दे रही है।

पी.एम.ओ. का केन्द्रीयकरण बड़ी समस्या

देश के इतिहास में ऐसा पहली बार हो रहा है जब केन्द्र सरकार धारा ७ का इस्तेमाल कर भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक को अपनी लाठी से हांकना चाहती है। खास बात यह है कि जब भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक देश के बैंकों के डूबत ऋणों की वसूली के लिए सख्ती कर रही है तो अपने चहेते अडानी, अंबानी जैसे कारपोरेट घरानों की डिफाल्ट करने वाली निजी बिजली कंपनियों के पक्ष में खड़ी होकर सरकार रिजर्व बैंक को ऐसा करने से रोक रही है। गृहऋण वित्त व गैर-वित्त से जुड़ी कंपनियों में नगदी की कमी की पूर्ति के लिए भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक द्वारा बनाकर रखे गये आपातकालीन रिजर्व राशि में ३.६ लाख करोड़ रू. निकलवाने वाली की रार अब चैड़े हो गई है। इस रार में एक बात तो साफ हो गई है कि सरकार चाहे कितने ही झूठे दावे करे हमारे वित्त, निवेश और अर्थव्यवस्था की हालात निरन्तर पतली हो रही है। आर.बी.आई. के पूर्व गवर्नर राजन का मानना है कि नोटबंदी-जी.एस.टी. जहां विकास में बाधा बनी वहीं पी.एम.ओ का केन्द्रीयकरण निरन्तर एक बड़ी समस्या बनी हुई है।

भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक और मोदी सरकार के बीच चल रहे टकराव के बीच अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय मुद्राकोश ने सरकार को चेताते हुए स्पष्ट कहा कि रिजर्व बैंक की स्वायत्तता में कोई हस्तक्षेप ठीक नहीं होगा। अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय मुद्राकोश के कम्युनिकेशन डायरेक्टर गेरी राइस ने कहा - पूरी दुनिया में अच्छी परम्परा यही रही है कि केन्द्रीय बैंक या फाइनेंसियल सुपरवाइजर की स्वायत्तता में सरकार व उद्योग का कोई हस्तक्षेप न हो। गौरतलब है कि वित्त मंत्रालय ने बिजली कंपनियों के डूबत ऋण के प्रति नरमी, नगदी की समस्या और छोटे कारोबारियों को ऋण देने के मसले पर आर.बी.आई. एक्ट की धारा ७ के तहत अपना नजरिया थोपने की दंबगई दिखाई है जो आर.बी.आई. के ८३ साल के इतिहास में पहली बार देखने को मिली है। मोदी द्वारा हर समस्या को पिछली सरकार पर डालना भी अब मजाक बन गया है। पूर्व आर.बी.आई. गवर्नर रघुराम राजन द्वारा बैंकों के डूबत ऋण की सूची मोदी सरकार को भेजे जाने से लुकाछिपी करती मोदी सरकार के लिए भी शीर्ष अदालत के आदेश के बाद भी नाम जाहिर नहीं करने पर केन्द्रीय सूचना आयुक्त ने आर.बी.आई. गवर्नर को नोटिस जारी किया है। सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने साफ निर्देश दिये थे कि ५० करोड़ रुपये से ऊपर के डूबत ऋण न चुकाने वाले हर व्यक्ति का बैंक नाम बताये।

बेशुमार भ्रष्टाचार

देश के इतिहास में नरेन्द्र मोदी के नेतृत्व में सत्तारूढ़ ये पहली ऐसी सरकार है कि जो भ्रष्ट कारनामों और अपने

पूंजी सहोदरों को गलत तरीके से लाभ पहुंचाने के नित सामने आ रहे खुलासों का संज्ञान लेकर समुचित कार्रवाई के जरिये दूध का दूध और पानी का पानी कर सच्चाई को देश के सामने रखने के बदले वह कोई जांच पड़ताल तक को तैयार नहीं। पारदर्शिता के बदले राष्ट्रहित में गोपनीयता का जामा पहनाकर हर मामले को वह छुपाने में लगी है। सी.बी.आई. जांच में रक्षा सलाहकार अजीत डाभोल का दखल व केन्द्रीय मंत्री हरिभाई चौधरी पर करोड़ों की रिश्वत लेने के लिखित आरोप डी.आई.जी. मनीष कुमार सिन्हा ने लगाये हैं। रक्षा जैसे अति संवेदनशील और महत्वपूर्ण क्षेत्र में फ्रांस की कम्पनी 'दस्सो' से पूर्व में हुए सौदे में एकाएक बदलाव के बाद न केवल खरीदमूल्य में ३ गुणा से ज्यादा का अंतर की बातें सामने आ रही है बल्कि देश के अनुभवी सार्वजनिक उपक्रम एच.ए.एल.को एकाएक बाहर कर उसकी जगह निजी क्षेत्र की एक अनुभवहीन कंपनी को शामिल करने पर जो सवाल उठ रहे हैं, सरकार न तो उसका कोई जवाब दे रही है और न ही वह जांच पड़ताल को तैयार है। परिणामस्वरूप ३१ अक्टूबर २०१८ को जनहित याचिका की सुनवाई करते हुए सर्वोच्च अदालत को केन्द्र सरकार को यह कहना पड़ा कि वह १० दिन के भीतर रफाल की कीमत का ब्यौरा बंद लिफाफे में पेश करे। सरकार की ओर से गोपनीयता की बात करने पर सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने सरकार से कहा कि वह हलफनामा देकर बताये कि यह गोपनीय रखना क्यों जरूरी है। इस मामले में १४ नवम्बर को हुई सुनवाई में यह बात साफ हो गई कि रफाल से हूबहू वही विमान खरीदे गये जो वर्ष २०१३ में तय थे तो फिर दाम में इतना भारी अंतर क्यों ? जबकि सरकार के प्रवक्ता बार-बार यह दावा कर रहे थे, ये युद्धक विमान पहले से कहीं ज्यादा उन्नत हैं। इस बीच रफाल और नोटबंदी को लेकर सी.ए.जी. की चुप्पी पर ६० सेवानिवृत्त नौकरशाहों ने सवाल उठाये हैं। अगस्ता हैलीकाप्टर मामले में 'चोर मचाये शोर' के हल्ले में नरेन्द्र मोदी की सरकार द्वारा उसे 'ब्लैक लिस्ट' से हटाने के किये अपने काले कारनामों से ध्यान बटाने की चक्करी वापस उसी पर आनी है।

संविधान और लोकतंत्र के लिए सरकार ही बनी चुनौती

ज्ञातव्य है कि यह सरकार हर मामले में अपनी ताकत का बेजा इस्तेमाल कर रही है। सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के बीमा, बैंकों, आर.बी.आई, सी.बी.आई व अन्य संवैधानिक स्वायत्त संस्थानों में मनमाने ढंग से दखल दे रही है। सी.बी.आई निदेशक आलोक वर्मा को गलत तरीके अपनाकर आधी रात को छुट्टी पर भेजने के मामले में भी सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने मोदी सरकार को आड़े हाथों लिया है। सूत्रों के अनुसार सी.बी.आई. प्रमुख आलोक वर्मा प्रधानमंत्री के नजदीकी



Cartoon courtesy: Satish Acharya, sify.com

माने जानेवाले सी.बी.आई. के विशेष निदेशक अष्टाना पर लगे ३ करोड़ रू. की घूस के आरोप की ही जांच नहीं कर रहे थे बल्कि वे रफाल मामले की पड़ताल भी कर रहे थे। उन्होंने रक्षा सचिव संजय मित्रा को चिट्ठी लिखकर इस संबंध में जानकारी चाही थी। इससे नाराज मोदी सरकार ने उन्हें गैरकानूनी तरीके से आधी रात को छुट्टी पर भेज दिया। जबकि सी.वी.सी. के पास ऐसी कार्रवाई का कोई अधिकार नहीं है। लोकपाल के अनुसार प्रधानमंत्री, विपक्ष के नेता और मुख्य न्यायाधीश वाली सलेक्ट कमेटी ही ऐसा कर सकती है। रफाल मामला सीधे-सीधे प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी से जुड़ा है। रफाल की जांच जिसे सरकार कतई होने देना नहीं चाहती है ऐसे में सी.बी.आई. प्रमुख का उसमें आगे बढ़ जाना, मोदी सरकार के गले नहीं उतरा। ऐसी स्थिति में सर्वोच्च अदालत की भूमिका निश्चित ही बहुत अहम हो गई है।

नरेन्द्र मोदी सरकार में भ्रष्टाचार का ढक्कन दबाव सहन न कर पाने के चलते अब ब्लास्ट हो चुका है। रक्षा जैसे संवेदनशील क्षेत्र में सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की हिन्दुस्तान एरोनाटिक्स लि. को दरकिनार कर राफेल डील में रिलायंस के साथ निर्भार्ड यारी में ३०,००० करोड़ रुपये के किये वारे-नारे अब खुद नरेन्द्र मोदी के गले की फांस बन गये है। खेती और किसानों की दुर्दशा पर विश्लेषणात्मक लेख लिखने वाले पत्रकार पी. साईनाथ एक और खुलासा करते हुए कहते हैं कि फसल बीमा घोटाला रफाल घोटाले को भी पीछे छोड़ देगा। सी.बी.आई. के बाद आर.बी.आई. भी सरकार के गले में घंटी बांध गई है। भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक के डिप्टी गवर्नर विरल आचार्या ने केन्द्रीय बैंक में सरकार के दखल की बात चैड़े कर दी है। इस पर तलखी खाये सरकार के वित्तमंत्री अरूण जेटली ने १० लाख करोड़ रू. के करीब के बड़े खाते के बैंक कर्ज की तोहमत भी रिजर्व बैंक पर डाल दी है। दोष उनका नहीं, वे भी तो अपने प्रधानमंत्री की उसी सांस्कृतिक विरासत में पले-बढ़े हैं जो किसी प्रचारित वाह-वाही के लिये फोटो खिंचवाने को तैयार रहते हैं और तोहमत के लिए किसी और पर इशारे कर देते हैं। इसके लिए नेहरू तक चले जाते हैं। हमारी लोकतांत्रिक राजनीति इस समय पिछले साढ़े चार साल के बुरे दौर में गुजर रही है। जिसमें तोहमत के लिए पिछले ७० साल है तो गौरव के लिए पीछे के ८०० साल। भूत में मगन इस सरकार के पास भविष्य की न कोई योजना है न दृष्टि। पूंजीवादी वैष्ठीकरण की हां में हां है तो संकीर्णतावादी संरक्षणवाद की उलझन भी। पूंजीवादी यारी के वर्षीभूत भ्रष्टाचार के बह निकले नाले अब विकराल हो अब सत्ता सिंहासन को डोला रहे हैं। इस डोलते सिंहासन के बीच असल मुद्दों से ध्यान हटाने के लिए दिल्ली में संघ के कथित संतों ने दो दिन का सम्मेलन कर राम मंदिर के लिए अध्यादेश लाओ का कथित धर्मदेश भी जारी कर दिया है।

मुस्लिम महिलाओं के लिए कानून लाकर तीन तलाक से मुक्ति का ढिंढोरा पीटने वाली मोदी सरकार का ढोंग तब धरा रह गया जब सबरीमाला मंदिर में १० से ५० वर्ष की उम्र की महिलाओं के प्रवेश पर लगी पाबंदी को देश की शीर्ष अदालत ने हटा दिया। तब भाजपा मंदिर प्रवेश न करने देने पर अड़े पुजारियों के साथ खड़ी हो गई। भाजपा के राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्ष अमित शाह पुजारियों के बीच जाकर शीर्ष न्यायालय को ही ललकारते हुए कहते हैं कि 'वह ऐसा निर्णय न दे, जो लागू न हो सके।' क्या यह सरासर न्यायालय की अवमानना नहीं है? यह तो अवमानना

के साथ सीधा-सीधा धकमाने का कृत्य है कि जो हमारे पसंद का निर्णय नहीं होगा, उसे लागू ही नहीं होने दिया जावेगा। क्या यह अयोध्या में राममंदिर विवाद के बारे में भी सीधा-सीधा शीर्ष अदालत को संदेश नहीं दे रहा है कि यदि फैसला उनके पक्ष में नहीं आया तो वे उसे भी नहीं मानेंगे? शायद यही कारण है कि अदालत ने नियमित सुनवाई की तिथि स्थगित कर गेंद सरकार के पाले में ही डाल दी है। हाल ही में सामने आया है कि राष्ट्रीय स्वयं सेवक संघ अपने कार्यकर्ताओं को उस मंदिर में जमा कर माहौल संघर्षपूर्ण बना रहा है। विहिप और शिवसेना २३ नवम्बर से २५ नवम्बर के बीच अयोध्या में डेरा डालने की नौटकी कर चुके हैं।

इधर रामलला की चुनावी चिंता उधर बेकारी के हालात में नौजवान नौकरी न मिलने से हताशा हो अपनी जीवनलीला समाप्त कर रहे हैं। 'नौकरी लगेगी नहीं, जी कर क्या करेंगे' कह ट्रेन के आगे ४ युवा कुद गये जिसमें ३ मौके पर ही खत्म हो गये और एक की अस्पताल में मौत हो गई। २१ नवम्बर को अलवर में हुई ऐसी घटना के बाद भी विकास के खोखले दावे करनेवालों को शर्म नहीं आई और उन्होंने मानवता को झकझोर देनेवाली ऐसी घटना पर जुबां तक नहीं खोली। उधर महाराष्ट्र की भाजपा सरकार जिसने सुख के मुआवजे, कर्जमाफी और आदिवासियों को जमीन के पट्टे आदि की मांग पर तपती धूप में नगे पांव पैदल यात्रा कर नासिक से १८० कि.मी. के लांग मार्च पर मुंबई पहुंचे ५५००० किसानों से जो समझौता किया था, उसे लागू न करने के विरोध में पुनः २१ नवम्बर को ३०,००० की संख्या में लाल झंडा थामे किसान मुंबई जा पहुंचे। २९-३० नवम्बर २०१८ को 'किसान मुक्ति यात्रा' में लाखों किसानों ने दिल्ली में रामलीला मैदान और संसद पर अपनी चैपाल लगाई और सरकार को चेतावनी दी कि वह कर्जमाफी और फसल के लाभकारी मूल्य के लिए संसद में कानून बनाकर खेती और किसान को उबारने के पुख्ता काम करे और विशेष संसद सत्र बुलाकर उनके मुद्दे पर चर्चा करे। चाहे महाराष्ट्र की भाजपा सरकार हो या राजस्थान या केन्द्र की नकारा भाजपा सरकार, जनदबाव में जो वादे करती हैं, उसे भूल जाती हैं। समझौते को लागू करवाने के लिए भी बार-बार संघर्ष करना पड़ता है।

नोटबंदी के जिस फैसले की सरकार लगातार झूठी तारीफ करती रही उसे पहले आर.बी.आई. ने और अब सरकार के कृषि मंत्रालय ने नुकसानदेह माना है। कृषि मंत्रालय ने २० नवम्बर को संसद की स्थायी समिति के समक्ष माना कि नोटबंदी के फैसले से हुई नकदी की कमी के चलते लाखों किसान रबी सीजन की बुआई के लिए बीज-खाद नहीं खरीद सके थे। अब तो सेवानिवृत्त मुख्य चुनाव आयुक्त श्री रावत ने भी मान लिया कि जिस ध्येय के लिए नोटबंदी करनी बताई गई, उसमें एक भी पूरा नहीं हुआ। कालाधन, नकली नोट, घुसपैठ, आंतकवाद की स्थिति बनी रही है। देश के करीब २६.३ करोड़ किसान ऐसे हैं जो नकदी आधारित अर्थव्यवस्था पर जिंदगी गुजारते हैं। नोटबंदी ने किसानों की कमर तोड़ दी और उन्हें वस्तु विनिमय के गुजरे जमाने में ला पटका। ऐसी हालातों के बीच अब क्या यह बोलने का वक्त नहीं है कि जो तुमको है पसंद, वो ही बात हम क्यों कहेंगे? राजस्थान का किसान और अवाम अपने राजनैतिक सच्चे हितैषी वाम को शक्ति सम्पन्न करने की ओर बढ़ रहा है। उम्मीद है, अन्य राज्य भी इस बदलाव की बयार को समझेंगे।



DELHI and PARIS A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Stirring reminders of the distance travelled and challenges ahead in securing human rights.

Gopalkrishna Gandhi

(Former administrator, diplomat and governor
Courtesy: The Hindu 10/12/2018)

Paris flared — Paris, which the divine sun had sown with light, and where in glory waved the great future harvest of Truth and of Justice.

Émile Zola, Paris

I asked my soul: What is Delhi? She replied: The world is the body and Delhi its life
Mirza Ghalib

Exactly 70 years ago, on December 10, 1948, the UN General Assembly met in Paris. Delegates from the world's many ends met at the hilltop Palais de Chaillot and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of **Human Rights** (UDHR). The text had been propelled by Eleanor Roosevelt as chair of the drafting committee, and honed by some of the finest minds, scholars, legal and political idealists, visionaries. Selected by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to represent India in the drafting exercise, Hansa Mehta from Gujarat brought to the exercise her own distinctive feminism. Seeing the draft Article 1, "All men are born free and equal in dignity and rights," Hansaben intervened to say the times had changed and the line should read, "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." Roosevelt applauded and embraced the amendment.

In the post-Hitler, post-Hiroshima world that phrase meant more than any two could. The delegates to the Assembly nourished

visions of a global transformation. But, given that of the 58 member-nations, as many as 10 including the Soviet Union, South Africa and Saudi Arabia abstained or did not vote, the delegates must have understood that a document as idealistic as theirs would run into conceptual difficulties and be chronically short in application.

But they could not have imagined that on the Declaration's 70th anniversary, Paris, the Declaration's birthplace, would be the venue of a flaming stir, with cars burning along the Champs-Élysées, bringing life in the French capital to a stop. And that, as Emile Chabal has shown in these pages (Editorial page, *The Hindu*, December 6, 2018), provincial France and even France's Indian Ocean island of La Réunion would see sit-ins, blockades. Over what? Not something sporadic or transient or 'local' but over issues at the heart of the Universal Declaration: dignity, justice and equality.

The 'Yellow Vest' Paris riots which have shaken French President Emmanuel Macron's government are about much more than fuel price hikes, the immediate trigger. Following the stunning outburst, French Prime Minister Édouard Philippe announced a six-month reprieve from the hike, only to be rebuffed by the protesters as "too little, too late". Damien Abad, one of the youngest elected members of the European **Parliament**, said, "What we are asking of you Mr. Prime Minister, is not a



Cartoon courtesy: Carlos Latuff

postponement. It's a change of course."

In the days preceding the 70th anniversary of the UDHR, Paris saw scalding fire, Delhi saw a scorching ire. An unprecedented rally, with tens of thousands of farmers, men and women from all parts of India, catalysed by the intrepid spokesman for farmer and Dalit rights, Palagummi Sainath, and powered by kisan unions, converged in the national capital. They asked for farm loan waivers and for decent agricultural prices to be honoured. And then marching to Parliament, they demanded a session to discuss what has been a key concept in the UDHR: dignity. They asked that Parliament should discuss farmers' dignity threatened by the agrarian crisis in India which has led, from 1998 to 2018, to the suicides of some 300,000 farmers. Speaker after speaker at the rally spoke of **agriculture** being India's life, not just a feeder line.

The language used in Paris and Delhi has great similarities: business gets tax-cuts, agriculture gets diesel hikes. Factories get investments, farms do not even get minimum prices, affecting a human right described in Article 23 of the UDHR: "Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection."

Even as leaders of almost all major Opposition parties joined the rally, Delhi's Aam Aadmi Party government led by Arvind Kejriwal bolstered it with moral and material support. Delhi, instead of being the target, became the very life, the soul, of the farmers' protest.

But Paris's flare and Delhi's glare

The language used in Paris and Delhi has great similarities: business gets tax-cuts, agriculture gets diesel hikes. Factories get investments, farms do not even get minimum prices, affecting a human right described in Article 23 of the UDHR: "Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection."

notwithstanding, the Declaration is under severe strain, globally. Primarily because governments are, literally, laws unto themselves and also because the UDHR, though it has become part of the **constitution** and laws of several countries which attained independence after it was proclaimed, is not legally binding. It stirs a nation's conscience, not its laws. Law-makers and conscience-keepers coalesce but rarely. For most of the time, they are a species apart.

Curbs on dissenters can be seen around the globe, from China to Brazil, from India through Egypt and Turkey to the U.S. Myanmar which says 'no room' to its own Rohingya disregards Article 14, and Pakistan which hounds out Asia Bibi disregards Article 18.

Terrorism mutilates that most fundamental human right — to life. It has done that in India. On UDHR70 we mourn terror's victims in Kashmir, among who are brave defence and security personnel on duty. But on UDHR70 we grieve no less for the pellet-blinded, the collaterally killed innocents of the Valley.

Torture, physical and mental, has been used through time and around the globe by states and non-state tyrants. India, no exception to the gross pattern, signed, during I.K. Gujral's prime ministership, the UN Convention Against Torture. But subsequent governments of India have refrained from ratifying it. Why? Do they think custodial torture is an inherent — read 'internal' — prerogative of statehood which the world has no business commenting on? Emotional pain and fear can be felt in a myriad ways. Group-isolating can be incredibly painful, frightening. The reported acquisition of land



Cartoon courtesy: Satish Acharya

in Assam's Goalpara district for a 'detention camp' has been denied by the government, but the prospect brings to mind detention scenes from the world's history of ethnic ghetto-ing.

Human rights violations are not a 'state-gone berserk thing' alone. Society violates it in India with vigour. If the invoking of 'sedition' reflects state intolerance, what is one to say of the murder in cold blood of dissenters and whistle-blowers? India bans in law but perpetuates in practice manual scavenging. It bans in law but lives with child marriage. It bans pre-natal gender screening but is unable to stop it and that which follows, female foeticide.

Crimes against women, children in India seem unabating. We are in shame, unforgivable, unredeemable shame, to cite extreme examples, over the rape and murder of Nirbhaya in the national capital and of a child in Kashmir's Kathua district. If the Kathua murder had bigotry lurking over it, the beheading of a 13-year-old Dalit girl in Tamil Nadu's Salem district was laced with caste contempt. The Indian woman, if she is Dalit, tribal or vulnerable in age or personal circumstance, is all the more at risk.

FUDGING GDP DATA



contd from P10

nor the BJP is prepared to accept the grim reality that GDP growth neither reflects well-being nor prosperity as reflected in India's abysmal position in many international indicators such as human development, hunger, happiness, human capital index despite high growth.

This back series just adds to the impression

The Sentinelese's reflexive act against the misguided tourist who beached on their quiet shore has scarcely been appreciated by the average Indian. But he will applaud the ill-advised plan to convert that ecologically fragile archipelago into a dazzling tourist haven.

But this anniversary must not let grim facts obscure the 'rights rainbow' on the sky.

India's judiciary is the first of its vibrant colours. The Supreme Court's emphatic position on the right to privacy, among others, stands out. As does its sage extension of the deadline for those contesting their non-inclusion in the National Register of Citizens for Assam. Justice S.K. Kaul's order in the Madras High Court in the Perumal Murugan case, upholding the freedom of a writer to write, is something the UDHR would hail. Next, our Parliament, which has given us the **Right to Information Act**, following campaign advocacy by Aruna Roy and her colleagues. The third is that part of our media which will not be scared or suborned. The fourth, our security personnel, protecting our safety and our human rights activists protecting our liberty. The fifth, our creative cultural icons who will not surrender their autonomy. The sixth, our remarkable Constitution, B.R. Ambedkar's legacy.

And, finally, the seventh, vox populi! India's free elections are a 'UDHR asset'. The massive victory of the Left Front in Kerala's just-concluded panchayat elections, overcoming the right-wing lurch on Sabarimala, shows a silent majority's peaceable wisdom, and strength. Tomorrow, there will another unfurling of that rainbow.

Paris, on December 10, 1948, liberated rights from state and social shackles. They must stay liberated, and celebrated.

that this government often finds the truth inconvenient when it exposes its weakness. Former Chief Statistician of India Pronab Sen pointed out that the fact that the data was released by Niti Aayog led to questions over the credibility of the method chosen. Involvement of Niti Aayog has brought political considerations into the fray and dented the credibility of CSO as an independent organisation. The outrageous divergence in GDP estimates makes one doubt every single data put out by government's statisticians.

28th Conference of North Central Zone Insurance Employees' Federation



The 28th General Conference of NCZIEF was held at Dehradun (Uttarakhand) from 17-19th November 2018. The conference started with a colorful rally on the busy streets of Dehradun shouting pro-people slogans. The 600 odd rallyists assembled from the all twelve divisions across the entire North Central Zone alongwith comrades of other local fraternal trade unions. The rally culminated at Chandra Singh Garhwali Nagar, AMREEK HALL, venue of the Conference.

Com. Sanjeev Sharma, President, NCZIEF, hoisted the flag and paid floral tributes to martyr's column followed by the leaders all other delegates and observers. Com. Amanulla Khan and Com. V Ramesh together put 14 red and 14 white balloons into air symbolizing 28th conference and depicting our quest for peace and determination for necessary struggle amidst thunderous slogans.

OPEN SESSION

The Open session began in a jam packed Hall, named N.M.Sundaram Sabhagar with a Welcome address from the dias named as Com. R. Govindrajan Manch, by the Chairperson, Reception Committee, Sri S.S. Pangti, Retd. Commissioner, Garhwal Region. He quoted numerous struggles of the people of hills for the welfare of downtrodden and hoped the Conference to be successful in creating a milestone for the entire Working Class across the territorial limits of the Zone. Shri N.P.Sinha, Zonal Manager, NCZ while greeting the conference complimented the AIIEA for the constructive role it is playing and placed the present day challenges before LIC.

The Conference was inaugurated by address Com. Amanulla Khan, President, AIIEA. He pointed out that today there is a great challenge to democracy and secularism and it is important that all progressive sections come together to defend these fundamental principles of the constitution for the very survival of the Republic. He said that the economic policies being pursued have created huge inequalities and unless this situation is corrected, there is bound to be social explosion. He spoke on the progress registered by LIC and justified the demand for a good upward revision of wages, a final pension option and recruitment. He also emphasized the need for functional autonomy to LIC in the matter of investments and employee benefits. Pointing to the growing struggles of the workers and peasants, he said the nation will witness the biggest industrial action on 8-9 January 2019 and insurance employees will be a proud participant in this nationwide strike. He stressed on the need for unity in the ranks and consolidation of the organization to meet the enormous challenges of the present times.

Com. V. Ramesh, General Secretary, AIIEA in his address rose to address primarily focused on the issues within the Industry. Dwelling upon the subject of Wage Revision he explained the whole situation across the Public sector in general and financial sector in particular. While justifying the demand of 40% Wage, he said it is possible to secure this demand considering the enormous paying capacity of the institution and willingness on the part of the employees for a serious struggle on this issue. He also dealt on the issue of pension option and said the growing struggle against NPS by the Government and financial sector employees has created a favourable situation for advancement on this issue. He stressed the importance recruitment and called upon the employees to join the two day strike on 8-9 January 2019 to force the government to give up its anti-working class policies and orient policies that favour majority of the population.

Addressing the open session Com. Anil Bhatnagar, Vice President, AIIEA said that the present Govt. at Centre is dividing the people

on the basis of Religion to polarize the society for their political gain. He also warned the employees to remain vigilant on these issues. He said that today Govt. is trying to control all the regulatory bodies including RBI, CBI etc. and this is very harmful for all us and we must oppose it collectively.

Com. B.S.Ravi, Treasurer spoke on the necessity of broadbasing and integrating our struggles with those of the unorganised and peasants. He said this is necessary not only to advance the interests of insurance employees but also to protect the national interests.

Com. Ashok Tiwari, President, AIIPA also greeted the open session. He said that as the collective struggle of the people across the country is developing this Govt. is trying to divide the working class again. He called upon the members to read and understand the thoughts of Shaheed e Azam Bhagat Singh for united struggles against the ill designed policies and politics of the ruling class.

DELEGATE SESSION

The Delegate Session started with placement of the Working Committee Report and the audited statement of accounts by Com. Rajiv Nigam, Gen. Secretary, NCZIEF and Com. Rakesh Kanaujia, Treasurer respectively for adoption. The debate on the report was initiated by Com. Ravi Chaturvedi, Gen. Secretary, BKSFD, Faizabad Division, while expressing his full unanimity with the basic formulations of the exhaustive report, he added his views on the growing agrarian crisis, Communalism as a threat to the basic fabric of the Nation as a whole and criticized the neoliberal economic policies of the Government. This was followed by a lively debate in which 39 comrades took part. The participation of these comrades further enriched the report. Finally the debate was summed up by the General Secretary, NCZIEF, Com. Rajiv Nigam and the same was unanimously adopted. The statements of accounts were also unanimously adopted by the conference.



Coms Amanulla Khan, V.Ramesh, Anil Bhagnagar and B.S.Ravi intervened in the debate and gave valuable suggestions and a direction to the organization. A total of 13 Resolutions were passed unanimously including Recognition to AIIEA, Recruitment in class 3 and 4, On Agriculture distress, For Communal Harmony, Against Price Rise and Unemployment etc. The Report of credential committee endorsed that it is the first time that 05 women comrades took part in the debate, which is really heartening.

The Conference unanimously elected Com. Sanjeev Sharma as President, Com. Rajiv Nigam as General Secretary and Com. Rakesh Kanaujia as Treasurer for the ensuing term alongwith other office bearers of the zone.

Com. Sanjeev Sharma, President, NCZIEF in his presidential address called upon the units to strengthen the organisation by building unity on the ideological and political lines. He said such a n ideological and political commitment is necessary to meet the onslaught of neo-liberalism and the aggression of communal politics.

CULTURAL EVENING

On 18th evening a beautiful cultural program was organized by the Dehradun Comrades. The performances by the children, Artists and Our comrades were par excellence. The program ws beautifully designed and exhibited the true character of unity of the nation and diverse character. The democratic songs sung by a group were appreciated by all, who were present there. The group also sung the theme song of the conference “*Tu zinda hai tho zindagi ki jeet par Yakeen kar, Agar Kahin hai swarg tho utaar la zameen par*”.

The conference recorded its appreciation and gratitude for the magnificent manner in which the conference was organised by the Dehradun Divisional Unit. Conference successfully ended with the belief that “*The victory of life can be achieved through collective wisdom and struggle against all odds and evils.*”





J. Vijaya, Joint Convener, LICSZWWCC. Comrades R. Sheethala (Thanjavur), K. Thulasi (Chennai-2), D. Chitra (Madurai), K. Meera (Vellore), C. Selvarani (Coimbatore), S. Shanthi (Salem), K. Vijayalakshmi (Chennai-1), V. Sumitha (Tirunelveli) took part in the debate and enriched the report. The deliberation was no longer confined to women issues, but was about socio, economic and political spheres confronting us.

In the Conference, social activists, Com Thayammal, aged 86, who was the founder leader to form AIDWA and who fought against gender discrimination and Com. Nirmalarani who was responsible to hold "Grama Sabha Meeting" against the Coco-Cola Company, were felicitated by the Chief Guest, Com. M. Rohini.

Com. K. Jayalakshmi of Chennai-2 was felicitated in the Conference for being elected as First Woman President of LIC Employees' Co-op Bank.

Shri P R Chaudhary, senior Divisional Manager Ahmadabad also greeted the house, He said that the leadership of AIIEA and organisation like AIIEA has always played very important role in the growth of our industry. He said that he was very much impressed by the views of the speakers in this conference. MANAGER (p&Ir) Mr Alkesh Shah also greeted the meeting.

In the second session General Secretary placed the report of executive committee. 6 comrades and com JV Pansara ex president Ahmadabad unit put their views on the report and finally it was adopted



Comrades M. Girija, Joint Secretary, AIIEA, M. Kunhikrishnan, President, SZIEF and P. Karpagam, District Secretary, AIDWA greeted the conference. Com. T. Senthil Kumar summed up the proceedings and announced decisions to organize movement for 33% Reservation for women, to form GWECA (Gender Justice WE Care) Committee in all Divisions, to activate Media Response Committee, to hold Trade Union Class for women and to arrange for Gender Sensitization Programmes in Schools and Colleges. 23 resolutions including passage of 33% Women Reservation Bill and LIC Women demands, were passed and adopted in the house.

Com. Kailasamoorthy, who has won the Kalaimamani Award of Tamil Nadu State and trainer of Vizhuthukal Kalai Kuzhu was felicitated in the Conference.

The Conference came to an end with vote of thanks proposed by Com. S. Sivasubramanian, Joint Secretary, SZIEF.

unanimously. The annual accounts were also passed by the house.

The meeting unanimously elected Com. Chetan Makwana, Com. Nirav Khankar and Com. Ashok Rana as President, General Secretary and treasurer respectively.

11th CONFERENCE OF BDLIEA



Even after lapse of one and half years, it is ridiculous that the LIC management is still waiting for the nod from the government to initiate negotiation on major issues. Bringing extraneous factors and waiting for the development in the Banking sector is not acceptable and sooner the later, the LIC management should come

The 11th Annual General Conference of BDLIEA was successfully held on 8-9 December 2018 at Divisional Office premises Bhubaneswar. Com. C.M. Haibru, President, hoisted the association flag in highly emotionally surcharged atmosphere with Comrades raising thunderous slogans hailing AIIEA. The meeting hall was named as Com. N.M.Sundaram Manch, which was fully packed with a huge gathering of more than 300 comrades including lady comrades. At the outset heart touching peoples' song was sung by our comrades.

Com. Bishnu Mohanty, General Secretary, CITU, Odisha State Committee and Chairman Reception Committee welcomed the gathering and pointed out that Modi Government is making all efforts to change the labour laws in favour of corporate to the detriment of working class. Com. B.B. Nayak, General Secretary in his inaugural address expressed happiness on the growth of LIC and keeping its market share intact, despite steep competition from the private insurers openly pampered by IRDA and Government. It is matter of great concern that this premier financial institutions starves from functional autonomy due to the interference of the central government in the very sensitive area of LIC's investment policy.

Com. M. Girija, Joint Secretary, AIIEA, while inaugurating the conference highlighted the damages caused by the neo-liberal policies pursued by the Modi Government. She mentioned that the Joblessness is causing serious threat. Attacks on the trade unions and the workers are on the increase. Only, one strong and united workers movement is the need of the hour, she pointed out. Com. Shreekanta Mishra, General Secretary, ECZIEA, while addressing mentioned about the apathy of the LIC Management on the question of Charters of Demands and the dangerous effects of communal polarization by RSS led BJP government at the centre.

forward to commence meaningful negotiation on Charters of Demands, he stressed.

Com. Abhay Das, General Secretary, CDIEA, Sri L.P. Das, Sr. D.M. greeted the conference. The inaugural-cum-open session came to a close after felicitation to Com. Satyabrata Pattanaik, former general secretary of the association who retired from the services on 30th November. Vote of thanks was proposed by Com. R.N. Sahu, Organising Secretary. In the afternoon a massive rally was organized participated by more than 200 comrades which marching on the streets of the State Capital drew public attention against the anti-people and pro-corporate policies of the Modi Government through fire-cracking slogans.

DELEGATE SESSION:

In the evening on the 8th December, Delegate session was started with presentation of Annual Report by the general secretary and Audited Accounts by the treasurer. The discussion on the report was initiated by Com. Rupanarayan Sahu, Organising Secretary, stressing on the need to understand the current political situation and he reminded that AIIEA has been fighting against the neo-liberal policies for the last 27 years, because of which, LIC is still in the public sector. All the base units including, Com. Ahimsha Priyadarshini from Women-Subcommittee enriched the report by their valuable view reports. After summing up the general secretary on 9th December the report was adopted unanimously. A 15 points resolution was placed before the conference, concerning the nation, the industry, the farmers, attacks on dalits, attacks on women, on charters of demands etc. were adopted.

Com. C.M. Haibru, Com. B.B. Nayak and Com. A.K. Mohanty were elected unanimously as President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Com. Ramakanta Dash proposed vote of thanks.

44th Conference of ICEU Visakhapatnam

The 44th Annual general Conference of ICEU Visakhapatnam Division was held on 10th November 2018, at LIC Divisional Office premises, Visakhapatnam. The conference started with the hoisting of the AIIEA flag by Com Kameshwari, President, ICEU, amidst slogans of AIIEA zindabad. Rich tributes were paid to the martyrs of the struggle at the martyrs column.



The conference was inaugurated by Com Clement Xavier Das, General Secretary, SCZIEF. Addressing the gathering, Com Clement said that AIIEA is committed to the growth of LIC and has protected it in the public sector through various campaigns and struggles despite successive governments trying to dismantle it. While the world growth rate has declined from 5.4% to 4.6 %, LIC has shown a growth rate of 27%. The Modi government has denied the employees their legitimate share in the performance of LIC. The wage revision is due to the employees since August 2017, but the management has not yet commenced discussions on wage revision. The demand for one final option to the employees to join the 1995 pension scheme is long pending and the government is not allowing LIC to allow the final option for pension. The struggles against the present right wing government are rising consistently and the working class of the country will once again voice their dissatisfaction by a two day strike on January 8th & 9th, 2019, he said. Com Clement also gave a call to the employees to strive to make the 25th Conference of AIIEA, to be held next year at Visakhapatnam.

Addressing the conference, Com BS Ravi, treasurer, AIIEA said that ICEU Visakhapatnam Division has set a trend in campaigning for public sector LIC,

has stood All India first in many activities like strike actions, study circles and imparting TU education to its members. The inaugural session was also addressed by Com K Mohana rao, ICREA, leaders of LIC class I officer's Association, LIAFI, LICAOL.

The delegate session started with Com N Ramanachalam, General Secretary, placing the report of the ICEU, and Com P Purnima, Treasurer placing the audited statement of accounts for the year 2017. More than 35 delegates including 5 women comrades discussed on the report. Com Clement Das and Com BS Ravi addressed the delegates on the issues confronting the employees. Resolutions demanding immediate negotiations on wage revision, one final option to employees to join the 1995 pension scheme and to stop atrocities on women were adopted in the conference. The conference gave a clarion call to oust the right wing forces in the ensuing general elections, and to make the 25th conference of AIIEA a resounding success.

The conference unanimously elected Com M Kameshwari as president, Com KV Ramana Murty, Com B Ganapathi Ramu, Com G Varaprasad, Com CH Ratna Kumar, Com T Achari as vice presidents, Com N ramanachalam as General Secretary, Com P Purnima and Com YV Satish as joint secretaries, Com N Jagannadha Raju as treasurer and Com P Padmavathi as Assistant treasurer.

Com KV Ramana Murty, Vice President, ICEU welcomed the gathering and Com N Ramanachalam, General Secretary, ICEU proposed a vote of thanks. The conference was well attended by more than 350 comrades from across the division and was well covered by press and electronic media.



ICEU, Kadapa Conference gives a clarion call to make Jan 8-9 strike a resounding success

The 26th Conference of Insurance Corporation Employees' Union, Kadapa division successfully held on in Com NM Sundaram Nagar & Com Com BVS Raju premises (Indira Bhavan, Kadapa).

The conference preceded by AIIEA flag hoisting by Com MJA Baig, President, ICEU and paying rich tributes to Com NMS and Com BVS near Martyrs column.

Inaugurating the Conference, Com K Venugopal Rao, President, SCZIEF dealt in detail the global, national and regional situation we are operating in. He analyzed the failure of the Capitalist system and the continuing economic crisis since 2008 that led to huge economic disparities between the haves and have nots. The policies pursued by the NDA government at the Centre proved to be a disaster economically, socially and culturally. A massive and united struggle is needed, he said.

The Chief Guest of the Conference Com Clement Das, General Secretary, SCZIEF explained the challenges before the public sector in general and the insurance sector in particular. The government and the finance ministry is creating hurdles in realizing our just demands like wage revision, one more



option for pension, recruitment, five day week etc. He appealed the comrades to gear up for 2019 January 8-9 strike.

Com MD Mehaboob, Vice President and Com K Jayatheerth, Joint Secretary, SCZIEF also spoke. Mr DRKRM Sivaram, SDM and Com K Sankar Rao, GS, ICPA greeted the conference.

Executive Committee Report and Statement of Accounts placed by the GS Com Raghunatha Reddy & the Treasurer Com Kalyan Kumar were unanimously approved.

The conference passed 5 relevant resolutions.

Com MJA Baig, Com T Kalyan Kumar and Com G Varijathamma were unanimously elected as President, General Secretary and Treasurer respectively for the ensuing year.

Newly elected General Secretary Com T Kalyan Kumar proposed vote of thanks.

Celebration of Silver Jubilee of Pension

To celebrate Silver Jubilee of Pension Realisation, a meeting of pensioners was held at 10.30 A.M. on Sunday, 25th November, 2018 in the Zonal Office canteen Hall at Hyderabad. About 40-45 pensioners attended the meeting. Com. K. Venugopal, Vice-President, AIIEA, was the Chief Guest. In his address, Com. Venugopal briefly narrated the history of pension struggle and how pension was achieved through joint struggle with bank employees and officers. Because the convenor of the Joint Action Committee, Mr. Laxminarasayya of NCBE (majority union in SBI) was based at Hyderabad, Hyderabad became the centre of action and SCZIEF leaders, Com. V. Sugunakar Rao, Com. K. Venugopal and others witnessed the pension struggle from close quarters and participated in it. Com. Venugopal praised the negotiating skills and superb tactics of the AIIEA leadership, particularly Com. N.M. Sunderam, which clinched pension for LIC / Bank employees. Because of pension, employees are able to live with dignity and self respect after retirement, said com. Venugopal.

Com. M.J. Bhagya lakshmi, President, ICREA, Hyderabad and Com. K.N.B.Acharyulu, CC member, AIIPA, addressed the meeting and lauded the efforts of AIIEA leadership in securing pension. Com. D. Sriram, Com. K. Chidamber Rao, both Vice Presidents, ICREA, Hyderabad and many other pensioners also spoke and expressed their gratitude to the AIIEA for realising pension. Three senior most pensioners were felicitated with shawls and bouquets. Com. Ch.V. Shivram krishna, Jt. secretary, ICREA, Hyderabad, proposed vote of thanks.

Annual Meeting of Surat Division IEU

Annual General Meeting of SDIEU was held on 16th Dec' 2018 in LIC Sports Room, JeevanPrakash Building, Surat.

Com. Jaimin Desai, President of SDIEU, Presided over the Meeting.

Com. H. I. Bhatt, General Secretary, WZIEA, inaugurated the Conference. In his inaugural speech, he brought to light the economic, political and social aspects affecting the country. He informed that in recent Assembly Elections of three States working class has played a definite and decisive role and defeated the corporate friendly Governments. He stressed the importance of strengthening the Organization on the basis of political and ideological understanding. He dwelt in details regarding a Convention of Central Trade Unions in which AIIEA was a partner. He also explained how AIIEA is pursuing its demands and also achieving the same through tactical expertise. He gave details of the issues of 8-9 January 2019 strike and appealed all to make it a grand success. He also implored all the members to be prepared for struggle to achieve Charter of Demands and the protection of



LIC. He cited an example that on the outset Government has banned the Recruitment and on the other hand it has announced that there will be special quotas for Marathas and Muslims in jobs. This is nothing but a classic example of divide and rule. He appealed to all to be vigilant against divisive forces that are on rampant in the country.

The report was placed in the House by Gen. Sec. Com Devang Naik. He informed that since inception AIIEA is the only Trade Union in LIC which has united all the employees and protected LIC and improved the living standards of its employees. He appealed all to mobilize more non members under the banner of AIIEA to protect the Public Sector Insurance in India. Com. Samir Desai (CBO-2), Com. Rajubhai Desai (Bilimora), Com. H. N. Patel (OS/SDO), Com. Mihir Desai (Udhna Br.) deliberated on report. The report was accepted and passed unanimously.

The Conference adopted 18 Resolutions pertaining to LIC, PSUs, SC/STs, Women, Recruitment, Local Issues and Working Class in general.

The felicitations of bright students and retired Members were also done by Com. Kapil Purohit, Com. H. I. Bhatt and Com. Jaimin Desai.

The Meeting elected Com. Jaimin Desai, Com. Devang Naik and Com. Hemant Haveliwala as President, Gen. Secretary and treasurer respectively.

AGM decided to hold the Ladies' Convention on 20th January and to tour all branches to prepare the Members for two days' strike of 8-9 January 2019. Vote of Thanks was tendered by Com. H N Patel, Vice Pres..SDIEU.



11th General Council Meeting of IEU, Shivamogga Division

11th Annual General Council of IEU, Shivamogga Division held on 18th November 2018 at Shimoga was very successful as more than 150 Comrades from 14 branches actively participated in the meeting.

The Conference got off to a rousing start with flog hoisting by Com.M.Dev Vasanth Kumar, President, IEU, Shivamogga Division amidst thunderous slogans by surrounding comrades.

The Conference was inaugurated by Com.K.Venugopal Rao, President, SCZIEF. In his speech, he cautioned the participants to understand the threats to our democratic rights and freedom of expression by Modi Government. He also described in detail the present political and economic situation



existing in our country. He appealed all to develop political consciousness to understand the problems of Indian society.

Speaking on the occasion Com. J.Suresh, Jt. Secretary, SCZIEF, narrated the incidents happening in the country and strongly criticized the callousness of the rulers in dealing with the deteriorating financial position of the nation and the disturbing trends in the

Trade Union class by Cuttack Division IEA Com Pratap Kumar Patnaik felicitated

Com Pratap Kumar Patnaik, ex-Joint Secretary of CDIEA, retired from the services of LIC of India on 30 November 2018. He is an outstanding organizer and has tremendous contribution to progressive movement in Bhadrak. In order to felicitate him, a meeting was held on December 9, 2018 at Bhadrak LIC office campus in after noon. Com Shreekantha Mishra, Zonal Secretary, ECZIEA, profusely appreciated the charismatic leadership, ability of Com Patnaik. He also acknowledged the unstinted support of his wife Smt Sanjukta Das without whose co-operation Com Patnaik could not have contributed to trade union movement. Com Abhaya Das, General Secretary, initiating programme CDIEA recalled the contribution of Com Pratap Pattnaik to trade Union movement and society.

Representatives of all base units of CDIEA had attended the function with their rank and file and felicitated Com Patnaik. Com Patnaik in his acceptance speech told that

he has learned many things from AIIEA and what he is today is due to AIIEA. Com Patnaik praised the role of Insurance Worker profusely enhancing the intellectual ability of readers and donated Rs 5000/- to insurance Worker. While Com Managobinda Barik, president of CDIEA, presided over the meeting, vote of thanks was proposed by Com Naba kishor Behera, President Bhadrak base unit of CDIEA.

In the morning, a trade union class was organized in which Com Shreekantha Mishra, took the class on "Challenges before the working class and our task". The class was presided by Com M.G Barik where more than 100 members from different branches had attended apart from many leading activists from fraternal organizations.

After brief initiation by Com Abhay Kumar Das, Com Shreekantha Mishra, in his two hour long brilliant presentation, explained the manifold dangers the working class confronting each moment. He said that what

social fabric of the country as a result of the activities of right wing groups disturbing communal harmony of the nation. And he requested the comrades to make the two days national wide strike on 8th and 9th January 2019 a total success.

One more speaker Com.K.Jayatheerth, Jt.Secretary, SCZIEF, described in detail, the hardships facing by the LIC employees and requested the gathering to get ready for the challenges posed by the government to weaken LIC.

Com.K.Somashekar, President, SCZ ,Federation of LIC Class-I Officers' Associations and Com.K.L.Rao, The Office bearer of IPA, Shivamogga Division, greeted the occasion.

Com.S.Janardhan Naik, Gen.Secretary, IEU, Shivamogga Division, presented the Annual report followed by presentation of annual accounts for the year 2017 by Com.H.P.Raveesh, Treasurer, IEU,Shivamogga. 7 resolutions on present national situation, issued concerning LIC pensioners and other issues are adopted by the Conference.

The Conference re-elected Com.M.D.Vasant Kumar (President), Com.S.Janardhan Naik (Gen.Secretary), Com.H.P.Ravish (Treasurer) for 2018-2019. Com.S.A.Ravi, Jt. Secretary, IEU,Shivamogga proposed vote of thanks.

man has become today since its evolution is simple by dint of labour not by any miracle of external forces. But labour is denied its due reward. Agriculture being the largest employer is intentionally neglected to create space for capitalists. The public sector enterprises, which were called as temples of modern India is decimated by way of disinvestment or privatization .He also described the gravity of unemployment situation. He urged upon others to make January 8-9 strike as grand success.



JANUARY 2019



TALKING ABOUT THE TIMES PAST

- A Memoir by Chandrasekhar Bose

Com Chandrasekhar Bose, founder Member of AIIEA has penned down his Memoir. This Memoir is published by AIIEA with the title TALKING ABOUT THE TIMES PAST. The Book gives insight into the life and struggle of the Man who made enormous contribution to the development of the movement of insurance employees. The Book details important struggles and the tactics adopted by AIIEA to win decent living and working conditions for the insurance employees.

The Book was released in an impressive meeting of LIC and General Insurance Employees at Kolkata on 20th December 2018. Com Amanulla Khan, President, AIIEA introduced the Book and said it is a publication of the organisation and is a treasure of information on many important events in the history of the movement of insurance employees. He said it is necessary for every insurance employee to read the book to know the path traversed by the organisation and the difficulties and pains that the major leaders went through in the process of building the movement.

The Book was released by Com Neelima Moitra, a frontline leader of the women's movement and anganwadi workers. The first copy of the Book was handed over to Com Chandrasekhar Bose amidst thunderous applause. The Book is priced at Rs 200/-. And can be purchased through Divisional Units of AIIEA.

3rd Karnataka State Working Women Convention

The 3rd Karnataka State LIC working women convention was successfully held at Belagavi on 28th October 2018. More than 400 comrades, of which 350 women comrades drawn from the Eight Divisional Units of Karnataka State participated enthusiastically to contribute for the overwhelming success of the convention. The meeting venue was adorned with thought provoking banners/ quotes depicting the historic and revolutionary struggles for emancipation of women. Com. S. K. Geetha, Vice President, SCZIEF hoisted the flag of AIIEA amidst thunderous slogans reverberating in the air to herald the beginning of the convention and thereafter floral tributes were paid at Martyrs' column.

The Convention got off to a flying start with three revolutionary songs. Com. S. Varalakshmi in her inaugural address made a brilliant analysis of the situation that is confronting the Indian working-class, in particular the women and exhorted the working women to get united and fight the exploitative policies of the ruling classes. She congratulated AIIEA for making conscious efforts in mobilising women and encouraging them to involve in trade union activities. While explaining the situation obtaining in the country



and the plight of unorganised working women, she was critical of the claims of the Central Government with regard to the progress India has achieved in the last four and a half years. She informed that the government failed on all its promises made to the people. She concluded by expressing hope that through united struggles it is possible to defeat the anti-people economic policies and the threat of communalism and together we can fight for the women empowerment. She exhorted the insurance employees to make all the efforts to make the two day national strike on 8th and 9th January 2019 a grand success.

Com Clement Das, General Secretary addressing the convention congratulated the women comrades for their overwhelming participation and involvement in the Convention. He exhorted the audience to continue this trend and emphasised that no struggle would be complete without the participation of women. Be it the struggle for emancipation and empowerment of women, be it the struggle to fight for Equality, Justice, Liberty and Dignity. He expressed concern over the attacks on democratic institutions. He also outlined the glorious performance of LIC in the background of

MASSIVE CANDLE LIGHT DHARNA AT MADURAI AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE



The Working Women Sub-Committee of Madurai organized a massive street corner meeting on 10th of December 2018 against increasing Gender Violence on women.

The programme was held under the banner of GWECA (Gender Justice WE CAre) committee. It was presided over by Com. **G. Aruna**, Convener, GWECA. Com. **J. Vijaya**, Jt. Convener, LICSZWWCC welcomed the gathering. Prof. **Dr. Roseline**, Head, Department of English, Fatima College, in her address



a very complex economic scenario; he called upon the employees to be prepared for bitter struggles to protect the public sector insurance and against anti-people neo-liberal economic policies.

Com. S. K. Geetha, Vice President, SCZIEF presided over the inaugural session. Com. Sudha Ingle, IEU, Belgaum welcomed the gathering and the inaugural session came to an end with vote of thanks by Com. .H. R. Gayatri, the State Convenor.

The delegate session was conducted by a Presidium comprising of Com. Aparna, Belgaum, Com. Rekha, Shivamogga and Com. S. M. Parvathi, Mysore. In the delegate session, the report was placed by Com H R Gayatri, Convenor for discussion. The report sharply analysed the present situation prevailing in our country, the situation in which the women is placed called upon all the women employees to involve more and more in Trade Union activities and contribute

briefed about the practice and outlook prevalent in society and that we should come forward to change the mindset to put an end to rising gender violence. Com. **P. Suganthi**, State General Secretary, AIDWA delivered special address condemning the incidents of gender violence that are on the rise. She narrated the cruel killing of Rajalakshmi of Harur, Sowmya of Sitling and caste arrogant killing of Swathi and Nandheesh and the efforts taken by AIDWA to get FIR filed and to fight for justice. Candles were lit condemning the inhuman and arrogant killings. Women Sub-committee made massive mobilization and around 200 women comrades participated in the candle light dharna. Comrades from AIDWA, Samam took part in good number. The programme came to a close with vote of thanks proposed by Com. **D. Chitra**, Convener of Women Sub-Committee. There was wide publicity in both the print and tv media. Dinamalar daily, has displayed videos regarding the views of our comrades in their website.

for further strengthening of AIIEA. Twelve women comrades participated in the debate which was very lively and enriching. The quality of the debate reflected the confidence as well as growing involvement of women comrades in the day to day union activities.

The delegates session was enriched by a through provoking intervention by Com Clement Xavier Das.

Com. S. K. Geetha, while addressing the session, lucidly explained the various challenges that are being faced by working women. While explaining the various struggles carried out by women since ancient times for their rights, she said the inhumane neo liberal economic order is projecting women not as human being but as commodity. The struggles across the globe and in India are really encouraging and she called upon the members to be united and be prepared for bitter struggles and to be alert in defeating the attempts of the ruling classes to divide the society on communal lines.

The discussions were summed up by Com. J. Suresh, Joint Secretary. He congratulated all the units for making the convention a memorable one and called upon the units to consolidate the gains from the success and involvement of women. He also congratulated the women comrades for their large presence which has enthused the organisation. After summing up, the report was unanimously adopted. He called upon the units to take all the necessary steps to implement the following decisions of the convention.

- 1.To conduct the women convention regularly by all the units;
- 2.To conduct exclusive Trade Union classes every year for women members;
- 3.To conduct a survey of unorganised workers by all the branch units by 15th November;
- 4.To conduct the meeting of Divisional Convenors of all divisions twice a year;
- 5.It has been decided to shift the publication of Samata from Bangalore to Mysore. Com SR Malini of Mysore will be the Editor of the magazine. A workshop of all the potential contributors to the Magazine will be conducted in the near future.

The convention unanimously re-elected Com H R Gayatri as Convenor of Working Women Sub Committee of SCZIEF from Karnataka State.

The convention also passed 13 resolutions on various contemporary issues. The convention came to an end with Vote of Thanks by Com. H. R. Gayatri.

TU Class for Women Sub-Committee Members at Madurai



The Working Women Sub-committee of Madurai Division organized a Trade Union Class for Women Sub-Committee Members under the caption, “**Women – Space- Identity-Liberation**” on 24th of November 2018 at Sunil Maitra Illam, Madurai. Com. **S. Maheswari**, Joint Convener, welcomed the gathering of about 50 women comrades.

The Class was conducted in two sessions. The first session was presided over by Com. **D. Chitra**, Convener. The resource person was Com. **K. Swaminathan**, Vice-President, SZIEF. He narrated the status of women in society right from the origin and the various struggles taken up in the political and social sphere. He explained in detail the process of

gender sensitization in the Trade Union Front citing the quotes of Com. BTR. He elucidated that the gender based oppression prevalent in the society has to be countered in one voice in the journey to attain gender equality. Com. **J. Vijaya**, Joint Convener, LICSZWWCC, gave an orientation to discuss the issues openly cutting across barriers. It was then followed by a Group Discussion.

The Second session was chaired by Com. **G. Aruna**, Joint Convener. The presentation of the Group Discussion was very vibrant and enthusiastic. Comrades openly came out with their views. Two sets of questionnaire forms were collected which would help the leadership to identify new areas of functioning based on the talents of our comrades. Com Swaminathan clarified the queries raised in the Group Discussion and suggested ideas to strengthen the functioning of GWECA and Media Response Committees and instilled confidence to extend the activities of sub-committees in various spheres.

Com. **N.P. Rameshkannan** gave valedictory address and the programme came to an end with vote of thanks by Com. **M. Mallika**, Joint Convener

Higher Education Assistance Programme by

ICEU, Madurai Division organized a new initiative on 21st of November 2018 at Madurai. It was the Higher Education Assistance Programme by the renowned Educationalist Mr. **T. Nedunchezian** and his team.

The programme was inaugurated by Com. **E.M. Joseph**, former, Vice-President, SZIEF. The programme was meant for our members son/daughter who are students of X, XI and XII Standard. This turned out to be a very successful one. Around 50 students along with their parents totaling 150 comrades attended the session.

It is to be noted that Mr. Nedunchezian is son of Com. V. Thamoetharan, former Joint Secretary of ICEU, Madurai Division. Mother of Mr. Nedunchezian attended the whole programme and thus it was like the family function of AIIEA.

The programme was scheduled from 9.30

am to 5.00 pm. It was very informative and thought provoking and the session came to an end only at 7.00 pm. The session was arranged as lecture and a presentation with LCD. It turned out to be a very effective one that the audience was much inspired by the fantastic presentation of the Educationalist. As the session was dealt in an inter-active manner, it instilled confidence among the students and parents. Various scope and



Discussion on Ethics in Media & our responsibility at Chennai

The meeting of the Media Response Committee of the Women's Sub-Committee, of ICEU, Chennai Division II, was held at AIIEA Illam on 10.11.2018.

A debate on the topic 'Ethics of Media & our Responsibility' was organized by the Committee. Com. T.Sigamani, Research Head, News 18 Channel was the Chief Guest. Com. G.Anand, General Secretary, GIC Southern Region was also present.

Com. V.Anuja, Convenor, Media Response Committee, presided over the meeting. In her address, she expressed concern over the way in which the media is trying to sensationalise issues to increase their viewer ship. Some news channels do not even focus on genuine & important issues which the people should truly be concerned about.



A question-answer session was organized. The comrades who participated in the event raised a lot of questions on the ethics followed by the media in reporting news, why false news are propagated, why matters which truly need to reach people are kept in the dark, why unimportant & trivial news are sensationalised.

Com. T.Sigamani, while answering the comrades, admitted that the channels these days are either influenced by materialistic goals like gaining more commercials, TRP ratings, political affiliation, etc. This is the reason for the lack of authenticity of the news published. Some channels often curtail the freedom of reporters for obvious reasons.

Com.G.Anand, spoke at length about the experiences he had while participating in political debates in TV shows. He recalled that during the days of the Congress rule, the representatives of the ruling party were highly tolerant towards any sharp criticism raised by the opposition parties. Now the ruling BJP has adopted a non-tolerant view towards the opposition. The debates now are one-sided; biased & do not allow the viewers to have a holistic view of the subject-matter of discussion. About 60 comrades participated.

Com. R.Sarvamangala, Jt. Secy., ICEU, Chennai Divn. II, proposed the vote of thanks.

ICEU Madurai Division

avenues of higher education was dealt in such an exclusive way that the participants were so excited to know about newer courses and institutions. Apart from the typical professional courses, many courses of distinguished educational institutions across the country were introduced. Also, about the mode of the entrance exam of different institutions and different courses were dealt in detail. Tips to face entrance exam for IIT, NEET and other professional courses were given. Guidance for Commerce Group students to pursue higher studies was dealt separately. The programme not only throw open eyes of students, but was a boon to parents. Some of our members came to attend as it was being organized by our union. Later, almost all individually shared that it was a rich experience for them and they are moved that our leadership is taking utmost care of the family.

Seminar on November Revolution

by KSDIEA



The epoch making event of Great November Revolution in erstwhile Russia, in the last Century was celebrated in grandeur manner by KSDIEA on 14th of November , 2018, at the premises of Divisional Office , Salt Lake . November Revolution was one of the seminal events of the twentieth century that changed the course of the history under the great leadership of Com. V.I.Lenin by establishing a social system where exploitation by men was completely ceased and working class seized the power of the state first time in the world. Since, the working class , of the entire global community celebrate this historical day to take pledge to strengthen the working class movement at their own soils against capitalist exploitative system . In commemoration of this illustrious victory of working class in Russia, this year too, KSDIEA organized a “Seminar” on the subject: “Working class in India at the present juncture and tasks ahead”. The only speaker of the seminar was Com. Satanjib Das, the president of EZIEA. Com Haridas Saha, president of KSDIEA presided the meeting.

In his welcome address, Com Ujjal Paul, the General Secretary of the organization, briefly explained significance and relevance of celebrating the occasion in the present context before a packed audience. Com Chandrashekhar Bose, the legendary personality of insurance employees’ movement also graced the occasion.

In his more than one hour long deliberation, in an eloquent style, Com Satanjib Das, mesmerized the listeners who came over from different units of the organization. He continued that November or October Revolution was one of the three epoch making events that enthralled the exploited people of the entire globe. The other two events of great victory of Red Army over Nazi Fascism

their sufferings are common and they have a common enemy – the neo-liberalism and the anti people policies of the present “Modi government” . He cited the statistics of a study done by Azim Premji University that says despite of high economic growth , India has failed to create jobs during the tenure of present ruling class and the labour productivity has increased by six times in the past three decades while wage increased by only 1.5 times. He mentioned that LIC employees are demanding a decent wage revision commensurate with the paying capacity of the institution and increased per capita servicing. But unfortunately, this legitimate demand is being denied by the gvt and management. Incidentally, he focused, that LIC, as public sector in India is a rare phenomenon in the world under neo-liberal regime and it was possible due to the great struggle of AIIEA since opening up of insurance sector.

Com Das also emphatically explained that unity of working class is under serious threat by the concentrated effort of RSS , the philosophical base of BJP govt, fundamentally trying to destroy the diversified culture of Indian society, the strength of India. Therefore under this grave social and economic situation, the working community of India has decided to confront the govt with a two-day strike on 8-9 January, 2019, demanding reversal of neo-liberal economic policy. He invited the employees to participate in two-day strike massively to protect public sector in general and LIC in particular. The November Revolution has given us this invaluable understanding that ‘oppression cannot last forever and the workers are bound to win the ultimate battle’.

The seminar was ended with the presidential speech.

Visit of General Secretary & President, NZIEA at Jammu

A meeting of LIC employees was held on 08-12-2018 in connection with the education programme for them keeping in view the political and economic developments in the country and also to prepare themselves for ensuing two days strike on 8-9th January 2019.

Initiating the discussions Com. Naveen Chand, General Secretary Northern Zone Insurance Employees Association spoke at length on the political developments in the country and also the challenges before the Trade Union movement arising out of political decisions of the present NDA Government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Explaining in detail the challenges before public sector Insurance industry he cited the performance of public sector LIC in nation building since its nationalisation in 1956. He informed the gathering that as on date LIC has an investment of Rs. 25.15 lac crore out of which around 20.5 lac crore is invested in government and secured equity market. The performance of insurance employees is highest amongst the public/private sector. Despite the high performance of the employees, the government of India as a policy matter is denying wage revision to them which has fallen due on 1.8.2017. Govt. of India is also not allowing one more option for pension to about 12000 insurance employees who are left out of the pension scheme. These are the compelling reasons for the insurance employees to be genuinely agitated. Therefore, in order to realise the basic and fundamental demands of LIC employees All India Insurance Employees Association has taken a decision to give a call to join on 8th – 9th January 2019 nationwide strike by all the workers, peasants, students, women and other sections of the society. He appealed to make this strike a thunderous success.

Com. Anil Kumar Bhatnagar, President Northern Zone Insurance Employees' Association exhorted insurance employees to understand the complexities of the present-day political dispensation. Modi Government through its decisions since taking over the regime of the country has proved that the acts of the government are brazenly pro-rich and pro-corporate houses, though the slogan appears to be pro-poor people. He



cited various examples like demonetisation where around 150 poor people died waiting for their own money before banks. The jobs of lacs and lacs people were lost in the informal industry through demonetisation. The money deposited in the new accounts under Jan DhanYojna was eaten away by the banks in the name of minimum balance in their accounts. Implementation of GST regime by this government completely broke the backbone of the industry. Price rise, unemployment and corruption are highest under the present regime. The farmers are committing suicide, Dalits and minorities are tortured and killed by mobs who have the backing of ruling class, there is unrest amongst the students, education and health are completely ignored. The most dangerous trend in the country is the disharmony amongst the people being created by the provocative statements and actions of the leading cadres of the ruling class. The situation is becoming explosive for the unity of this country. Com. Bhatnagar also congratulated the peasants and workers by coming together on a single platform. For the trade union movement, the highest threat is the attempt of the govt. to crush TU rights under the garb of "easy doing business". Therefore, it is utmost need of the hour to be united, be ready for fierce struggles in the times to come so as to realise the demands of the insurance employees in specific and the demands of the people of this country in general through action of strike on 8th – 9th January 2019.

The meeting was presided over by Com. Muzaffer Ahmad Wani, joint secretary NZIEA Srinagar Division and conducted by Com. Pawan Gupta, Divisional Secretary of Northern Zone Insurance Employees' Association, Srinagar Division.

Insurance News in brief

■ A.M.KHAN, DHARWAD

Heeding to the pressure of the global big insurers, International Association of Insurance Supervisors (IAIS) has decided to replace the "too big to fail" insurers list prepared in 2016, with a broader framework which would come with effect from 2022. The "too big to fail" insurers list, which has names to nine insurers - Aegon, Allianz, American International Group, Aviva, AXA, MetLife, Ping An Insurance Group Co. of China, Prudential Financial Inc, and Prudential in Britain, was in the wake of Global financial crises. These big insurers were deemed very important to global financial system hence they were required to provide extra capital in the reserves to meet mandatory capital requirements known as "higher loss absorbency" or HLA from January 2019. This measure, the global insurers claimed, would reduce the share holders' returns. Thus the IAIS says it is moving away from a "binary" approach of imposing extra measures on a small group of insurers to a "proportionate" application of measures targeted at the activities of insurers that lead to systemic risk.

The IRDAI has constituted a working group with experts from the IRDAI and from both private and public insurers to review norms of the own damage segment of motor insurance. Though pricing of the motor own damage was de-tariffed in 2007, the basic product structure, including terms and conditions, continues to be governed by the general regulations and other provisions of the existing India Motor Tariff. The working group also review the classification of products under motor own damage, and product structure & design, including duration of products and expansion of product suite to include technology-enabled ones, according to a circular.

The present standard requirement of capital, for all insurance companies, irrespective of the sector in which they operate, is Rs.100 crore. Reasoning that it is not so in advanced nations and there are some players looking only for regional presence or are looking at some specific line of business, the IRDA feels that there is no need to

keep aside so much capital. Hence it proposes to introduce Risk-based Capital frame work. It claims that this will enthuse more players to come in and thus will increase insurance penetration.

IRDA also proposes to adopt

Sandbox approach. A sandbox approach allows insurance companies to experiment and test certain innovative products even before filing for approval of the same. Apart from promoting innovation in the industry, this, the IRDA says, would also help contain the impact of failures. A committee has been formed to go into this to frame the guide lines. IRDA proposes to bring this into effect from 2021 or 2022.

"The biggest advantage that LIC has is its strong brand value. LIC is synonymous for insurance in India and in spite of various promotional activities private sector insurers have not been able to create space for themselves in the minds of people. Besides, LIC has taken all possible steps to remain ahead of others in technology-enabled customer service. I would also like to mention that so far no company is able to match the reach of LIC in every town and village of India. LIC has achieved globally best standard in claim settlement not because of stringent underwriting. LIC has achieved excellence because it has been ingrained in the mind of each person working for LIC, whether as a salesman or as an employee, that claim settlement needs to be given highest priority. It is not just a process of doing a particular job. In fact, claim settlement operations are motivated by strong empathy that everybody has been trained to adopt and practise in this large institution. Prompt claim settlement is a matter of faith and not just a duty for most of the employees and the officers. Underwriting, of course, has to be judicious but it is never done for depriving somebody of a legitimate life cover" says Kamalji Sahay, former executive director of state-owned LIC of India and founder MD & CEO of Star Union Dai-ichi. **It is one thing to praise the functioning of an organisation when you are part of it but to praise it after exiting and joining a competitor reveals the truth of the organisation being praised.** Kamalji Sahay has written a book 'The LIC Story: Making of India's Best-Known Brand' which elucidates how the insurance behemoth (LIC) has made a place in every household in the country



US: GROWING OPPOSITION OF THE WORKING CLASS TO FIGHT GENERAL MOTOR PLANT CLOSINGS

On 26th November General Motors announced it was closing 5 plants in the United States and Canada by early 2019 and eliminating the jobs of nearly 15000 hourly and salaried workers in America in major assembly plants- Detroit, Hamtramck, Lordstown, Ohio and Oshawa, Ontario and two transmission plants. The General Motor workers in a meeting held on December 9 have decided to fight this action.

HYUNDAI, KIA WORKERS in South Korea in opposition to attacks on wages

Workers at HYUNDAI Motors staged a 4 hour walkout strike on 11th December to protest the plans by the Company and Government to impose massive wage cuts on Auto workers in the city of GWANGJU. Some 51000 workers from HYUNDAI and 29000 from KIA Motors took part.

CHILEAN WORKERS STRIKE OVER LAYOFFS

Public Employees throughout Chile went on an indefinite strike on 6th December in response to the layoff of over 2000 public workers since March, when the conservative Government took Office. Several thousand protestors marched to the Presidential palace and the Finance Ministry in Santiago.

JAMAICAN PORT WORKERS STRIKE OVER UNFULFILLED CONTRACT PROVISIONS

The Kingston Free Port Terminal in Jamaica was hit with a strike by thousands of workers on 7th December. The strike was on the demand of Job classification, evaluations and Rankings, pay rates and time frame for payment of Retroactive wages.

LOS ANGELES TEACHERS FIGHT FOR SOCIAL EQUALITY

Teachers are without a new contract for more than year. Los Angeles teachers, students and parents assembled on 8th December in a mass rally in downtown. They are part of growing movement worldwide of teachers, students and workers against social inequality and austerity.

STRIKE BY AMAZON WORKERS IN SPAIN AND GERMANY AGAINST DANGEROUS WORK CONDITIONS

The Amazon workers at the SAN FEMANDO DE HENERES Fulfillment Centre in Spain and GARBAN and LEIPZIU in Germany were on strike on 7th December. The workers at all three sites were protesting dangerous working conditions and to oppose anti union stance. Amazon workers in Germany have been in dispute and have intermittent strike action since 2013 demanding collective bargaining agreement.

PROTEST BY HUNGARIAN WORKERS

Over 10000 workers held a protest in BUDASPEST on 8th December against changes to the labour laws. Under the proposed changes workers could

Working Class Struggles

S.SRIDHARA, MYSORE ■

be required to work upto 400 hours overtime a year, up from the current 250 hours. The workers are demanding pay increase. According to workers, the wages in HUNGARY are among the lowest in EUROPE.

SPANISH RAIL STRIKE AT RENFE FOR MORE STAFF AND PAY INCREASE

Rail Guards at the Spanish state-owned Rail Company struck work on 14th December over pay raise & working conditions. More widespread strikes have been called on 21st December and 7th January 2019. The Demand includes pay increase and more staff. The workforce is reduced from 50000 to 25000 since 2005.

STRIKES BY IRANIAN SUGAR AND STEEL WORKERS OVER JOBS AND PAY ENTER SECOND MONTH

The strike by workers at the HAFT TAPPEH plant in South Western IRAN is now in its second month. They began the strike on November 5th to demand the plant to be Re-Nationalised. Since privatization, jobs have been cut and wages are in arrears. They are also demanding the release of Union Representatives, Journalists, Activists who were arrested. The Steel workers at the National Steel Industrial Group have also been on strike for over a month over wage arrears. They have held daily protests for three weeks outside Government Office in AHVAZ-SOUTHWESTERN IRAN.

ISRAELI SOCIAL WORKERS RESUME STRIKE ACTION OVER PAY AND WORKING CONDITIONS

On 6th December, after a month's interlude, social workers in NORTH ISREAL resumed their programme of strikes. They are fighting for improved pay and safer working conditions.

WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA'S PLASTICS INDUSTRY CONTINUE THEIR TWO MONTH PAY PARITY STRIKE.

Ten thousand Plastic Engineering Workers are continuing their strike for pay parity with their metal engineering workers. The metal workers also began striking two months ago for a 15% increase.

LIBYAN OIL AND PORT WORKERS STRIKE OVER PAY AND CONDITIONS

Oil production and sea port Workers went on strike at nine oil fields from 8th December for a wage increase and implementation of Health insurance.

OVER 4000 KAISER PERMANENTE MENTAL HEALTH WORKERS ON STRIKE IN CALIFORNIA

Mental health care workers went on strike on 10th December. They are demanding higher wages increased staffing and want to end the two tier health care and Pension Schemes. They are demanding improved Health care and better Pension Schemes.

Economic Tid Bits

■ J.SURESH, MYSORE

- General Motors has announced that it will close five plants in the US and Canada in 2019 and another two plants outside of North America. This will eliminate 14700 jobs and is part of its plan to cut \$ 6.5 billion in costs by 2020. GM is also wiping out the jobs of 8000 or 15% of engineers and designers in North America. The auto maker, which reported a 37% increase in third-quarter operating profits in North America, is in the midst of a two-year \$ 10 billion spending spree on stock buy-backs and dividend payouts to rich investors. The new round of North American closures follows GM's announcement of its planned closure of its assembly plant in Gunsan, Korea; the sell-off of its European Opel and Vauxhall operations to French Carmaker PSA, and the shuttering of its plants in Australia and South Africa.
- USA has announced new sanctions against Venezuela and Cuba reflecting the increasingly aggressive and militaristic policy towards Latin America. It has announced a measure aimed at impeding Venezuela's exports of gold, which have become an important source of foreign exchange for the country's crisis-ridden economy. US officials claim that Venezuela has exported some 20 tons of gold to Turkey, a NATO ally with which US has come into increasing conflict. Venezuela and China has recently signed an agreement to develop country's gold-mining sector. The gold sanctions follow a US embargo against Venezuelan oil, which accounts for roughly 98% of the country's export earnings. USA also announced a new set of sanctions against Cuba targeting some two dozen economic entities allegedly tied to country's military, which has extensive economic holdings. This is in addition to some 180 Cuban entities targeted by USA last year. These sanctions were announced on the same day UN General Assembly condemned the 58 year old US economic blockade against Cuba, with 189 countries voting for the resolution and only two – USA & Israel voting against.
- Catalonia region in Spain is witnessing waves of protest against the austerity measures being proposed by the regional nationalist government. It is estimated that between 2009 and 2015 health care spending was slashed by 31%, the highest of all regions in Spain, social spending by 26% and education spending by 12%. Catalonia was the region where university fees rose the most – by around 158% - so that the average cost of University credit is Euro 41.17 compared to the national average of Euro 17.70.
- According to the Annual Mortality Report from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the life expectancy in the USA continued its extraordinary decline in 2017 after stagnating in 2016 and falling in 2015. The average life expectancy in the US declined from 78.7 to 78.6 years. Life expectancy dropped for Males from 76.2 to 76.1 but remained the same for females at 81.1. Life expectancy for female has consistently been higher than the male and the gap continues to widen. In 2017, over 2.8 million Americans died, an increase by approximately 70000 from the previous year and the most deaths in a single year. The US suicide death rate rose to the highest in 50 years last year. Since 2008, it has ranked as the 10th leading cause of death for all ages. The figures contained in the latest CDC report reflects the diseased nature of American society and the failure of capitalist system.
- According to 2018 Annual Homelessness Assesment Report (AHAR) published by Department of Housing and Urban development (HUD), on any given night in USA, 5,30,000 people experience homelessness. 36000 of those experiencing homelessness is on any given night were unaccompanied youth under age 25, of this almost 90% were between the age of 18 and 24. White people accounted for 54% of homeless overall. Half of all people experiencing homelessness were in one of five States; California, New York, Florida, Texas or Washington.
- According to a report released by NITI Aayog, a growth rate of 9% by 2022-23 is essential to generate enough jobs in India and achieving prosperity for all. It also said that the target should be 8% growth over the period 2018-23. This will raise the economy's size in real terms from \$ 2.7 trillion in 2017-18 to nearly \$ 4 trillion by 2022-23. It has also targeted that tax -GDP ratio to be raised from 17% to 22%.

For our Field Force

■ ARIVUKKADAL, THANJAVUR

LIC 2017-18: LIC has realised a profit of Rs.25,646.62 crore by way of sale of equity in the stock market with a growth of 32% and generated a total valuation surplus – considered as the net profit of the corporation — of Rs.48,444.82 crore, registering a growth of 10.1%. It had also made an investible surplus of Rs.3,68,660 crore. After distributing 95% of the surplus to policyholders as bonuses, the balance of 5% amounting to Rs.2,430.19 crore is the share of the Government. LIC had an annual income of Rs.5.23 lakh crore and achieved the highest ever first year premium income of Rs.1,34,551.68 crore in the year 2017-2018. The corporation now manages assets worth more than Rs.28.45 lakh crore, making it the largest financial institution in the country. LIC had ended FY 2017-18 with a total premium, including renewals, close to Rs.3,17,000 crore and the total investment income is Rs.1,97,000 crore. During 2017-18, the corporation has invested Rs.2.62 lakh crore in Central and State Government Securities, Rs.37,824 crore in corporate bonds and Rs.88,980 crore in equities. During the year 2017-18, the corporation settled claims of over 2.66 crore claimants for an amount of Rs.1.11 lakh crore.

Importance of LIC: "LIC is a blend of government and market. It has played a pivotal role in strengthening the economy and has contributed to the growth and economic development of the country with large-scale financial investments in the infrastructure and social sector. LIC has contributed significantly in making India an economic superpower in the world. They understand the pulse of the people. In the next 25-30 years, there will be varied trends of economic development as the new geopolitical order emerges, these kinds of uncertainties give rise to increased importance to LIC" **Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan** said.

LIC premium in Paytm: Paytm has partnered with LIC to offer online insurance premium payments on its platform.

Average premium: Average premium per policy in LIC was Rs.13,943, while, it was Rs.52,969 in private companies, for the April to November 2018 period.

Receipt through SMS: IRDAI has asked all the insurers to inform policyholders through messages on receipt of premium from January 1. Also, in case of new contracts, it may be ensured that the correct mobile phone number is captured to ensure SMS is sent on receipt of premium by the insurer.

Intermediary Remuneration: IRDAI has clarified

that the remuneration made to the insurance web aggregators will be in line with what is listed for insurance intermediaries. The job of an insurance web aggregator is to provide information on insurance policies of various companies on their website. Remuneration will be paid to the aggregators only in case of a lead being converted into policies that are bought by policyholders. However, "no charges shall be paid to the aggregators for transmission of leads to the insurers".

Third-party cover GST: Prime Minister's Office (PMO) has asked the finance ministry (Department of Financial Services) to look into the heavy 18% GST on third-party insurance premium and "prepare a proposal that can be placed before the GST council.

Capital requirement: According to Nilesh Sathe, Member (Life), IRDAI, the Rs.1000 Crore capital requirement for insurance companies in India, will be reconsidered, to encourage new companies in the sector.

Compulsory PA: IRDA notified that buyers of new personal vehicles can opt out of the compulsory personal accident cover. However, this will be valid only if the driver and vehicle owner already have Rs 15 lakh personal accident covers. The customer also does not need to have separate personal accident cover for separate vehicles.

Third-party detariff: IRDA has indicated that it would disband the practice of annual fixing of premium for third party (TP) insurance for motor vehicles from 2020-21. Truckers strike is considered as the main reason behind this move.

Sachet insurance: MobiKwik has launched sachet sized products and a user can buy insurance of Rs.1 lakh for a year for as low as Rs.20, that too in less than 10 seconds. In the first phase, the company has rolled out accidental insurance for the users and It will be partnering with leading insurance companies to offer the extensive range of products to its users. Buying insurance will be a paperless, 2-step process and issuance of the policy will be instant.

Insurance Awareness: The life insurance industry is readying a Rs.100-crore multimedia campaign covering television, radio, digital and PR platforms, funded by insurance companies including LIC, to spread awareness around life insurance and removing misconceptions around the products.

Evening Classes in Sanitary Workers Colony in Madurai

ICEU, Madurai has started evening classes for students of Sanitary Workers Colony at Subramaniyapuram on 6th of December 2018 under the banner of Dr. Ambedkar Education and Employment Centre.

The pamphlet for the inauguration programme was distributed in the colony by our comrades on 5th December.

It was decided to inaugurate the programme on 6th December, in memory of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar who has sacrificed his life for the mission of attaining social justice in Indian Society.

The programme was presided over by Com. S. Balasubramaniam, District Secretary, TNUEF. Com. N. Sureshkumar, Vice-President, ICEU and on behalf of Dr. Ambedkar Education and Employment Centre, delivered Special address inviting the students to make use of the classes



and assured the residents that our organization is committed and working towards educating the people in its true spirit in order to attain social justice in the country.

This innovative programme has enthused the residents and has built up confidence.

Delhi Cooperative Thrift & Credit Society commended



The Northern Zone Insurance Employees' Cooperative and Thrift Society Ltd, New Delhi has been conferred 'Cooperative Award' by Hon'ble Minister of Cooperatives, Government of NCT,

Delhi and a Commendation Certificate for the commendable performance in the cooperative sector for the year 2017-18. The Award is instituted by the Registrar of Cooperative Societies. Insurance Worker congratulates the Managing Committee for the excellent work they are doing.

Response



This refers to the editorial 'nationwide strike on 8-9 January 2019.' The editorial presents a grim picture of the Indian economy battered by the neoliberal economic policies. Hoping that their lot will improve the people voted NDA to power. But alas it did not take much time to realise that their hope and faith were blown to smithereens. Indian farmers unable to repay the debt took their lives. And thousands of lakh of our Indian youths are facing a bleak future due to unemployment. Now farmers and workers are determined to construct a unity to prepare for future struggles. Any attempt to break this unity will be defeated. We are united and unitedly we will participate in the two day strike on 8-9 January 2019.

- K.Narayana Rao,
Bangalore

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

Month	Base 2001	Base 1960
April	288	6573.86
May	289	6596.69
June	291	6642.34
July	301	6870.60
August	301	6870.60
September	301	6870.60
October	302	6893.42
Base1960=Base2001x22.8259		

DONATIONS

ICEU Machilipatnam	
Divl Conference	Rs.7500
Com.M.Shivaprasad,	
DO Vishakapatnam	5000
Com.Isac Bada .	
Ambikapur Br.	1100
Com.B.A.Janardhan,	
Madikeri Br.	5000
Com. Shylaja,	
Mysore Br. 1	1000
INSURANCE WORKER heartily thanks these comrades & units	



On November 29, 2018, tens of thousands of farmers and agricultural workers – women, men and children – from almost every state in the north, south, east and west, marched on the streets of the national capital and captured the hearts and minds of millions of progressive, working and toiling people all over India.

They came with a rainbow of thousands of flags and banners that mingled in unity – red, green, yellow, blue, white – all except saffron.

The now historic Kisan Mukti March was organised by All India Kisan Sangharsh Co-ordination Committee, a united platform of more than hundred farmers' organisations taking up their issues all over the country.



AIEA COMRADES GREETING THE MARCHING FARMERS

On November 30, 2018, this assembly representing crores of Indian farmers adopted a Manifesto of Indian Farmers, calling upon the Parliament of India to immediately hold a special session to address the agrarian crisis by passing and enacting the two Kisan Mukti Bills that are of, by and for the farmers of India, namely,

1. The Farmers' Freedom from Indebtedness Bill, 2018; and
2. The Farmers' Right to Guaranteed Remunerative Minimum Support Prices for Agricultural Commodities Bill, 2018. This manifesto also contains 19-point charter of Indian farmers.



Insurance Employees' Union

Belgaum Division

1994 – 2019

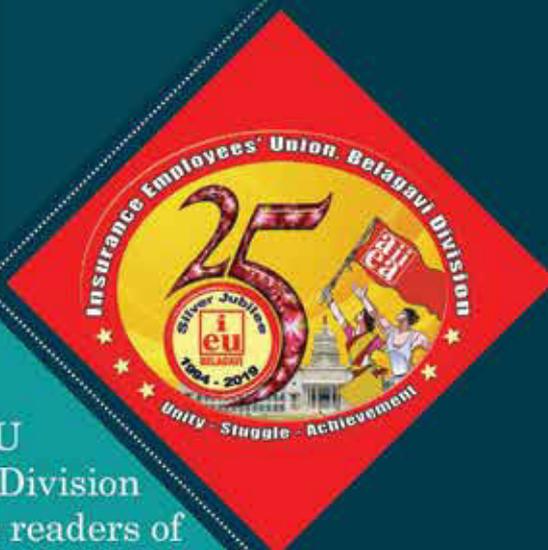
25 Years of Glorious Existence



Insurance Employees' Union,
Belgaum Division doesn't have
the luxury of an infant; it has to
shoulder the responsibility of an adult.....

- **Com N.M.Sundaram**

while inaugurating Belgaum Divisional Unit
on 8 th January 1994



IEU
Belgaum Division
Wish all the readers of
Insurance Worker

*A
Happy
New Year*